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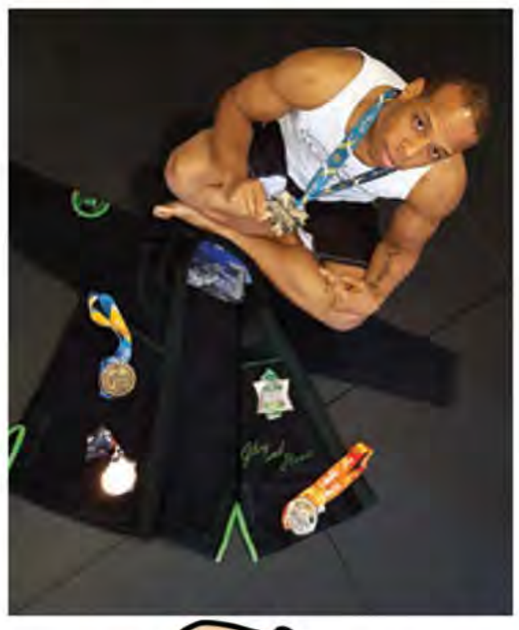

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MEET THE EXPERTS

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ARRINGTON

Is an award winning chef out of Boothbay, Maine. He is the author of GrapplerGourmet.com, a comprehensive guide to cooking for the BJJ lifestyle. On the mats he is a blue belt out of PSABJJ in Brooklyn, NY, and a personal chef off the mats. Follow MacKenzie at **facebook.com/grapplergourmet**.

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Certified Strength and Conditioning Coach who trains under Andre Galvao in San Diego, CA. Will specializes in mobility training, injury prevention, and kettlebell strength and conditioning. For more info visit his website at **ironwillathletics.com**

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Dr. Day is a physician and Internal Medicine resident in South Carolina. His medical interests include cardiology, sports medicine, and critical care medicine. He began practicing jiu-jitsu while in medical school and trains under Jeb Brown at Lexington Jiu Jitsu.

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FLORES

Is currently a jiu-jitsu purple belt under Gracie Barra's Rafael "Mosquito" Olivera. Has a bachlors degree in history and currently working on an MBA. His jiu-jitsu photography can be seen on Instagram under the name **BjjFotos.**

Look for us Online:
@jiujitsumag

ON THE COVER

Clark knows more than the Omoplata.

Photo: Richard Knapp, Illustration:
Mike Dytri

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20 Years and still going strong!

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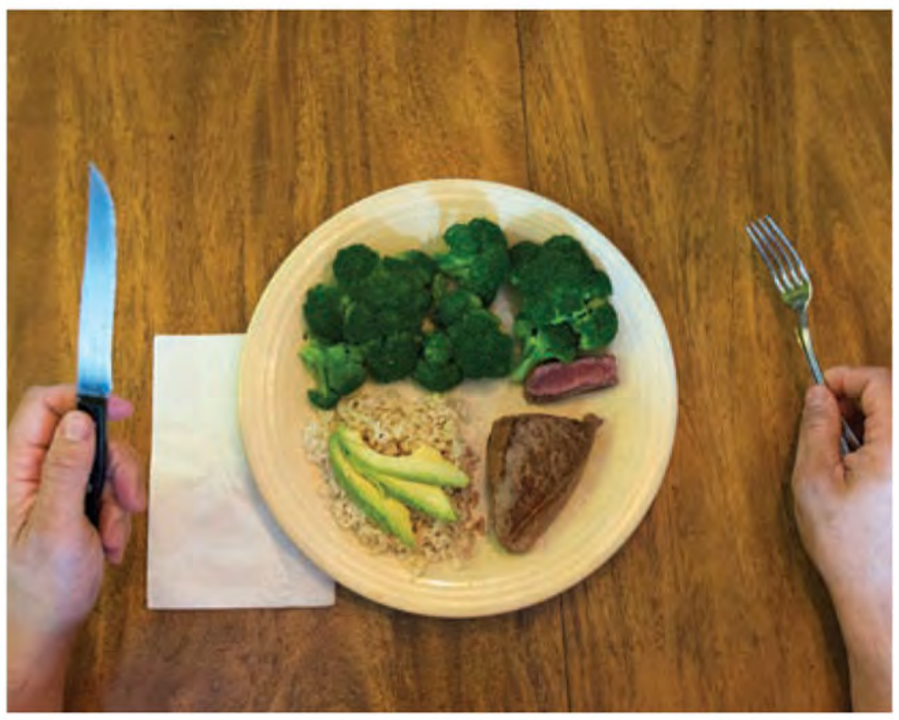
Keep it strong, everything follows the neck.



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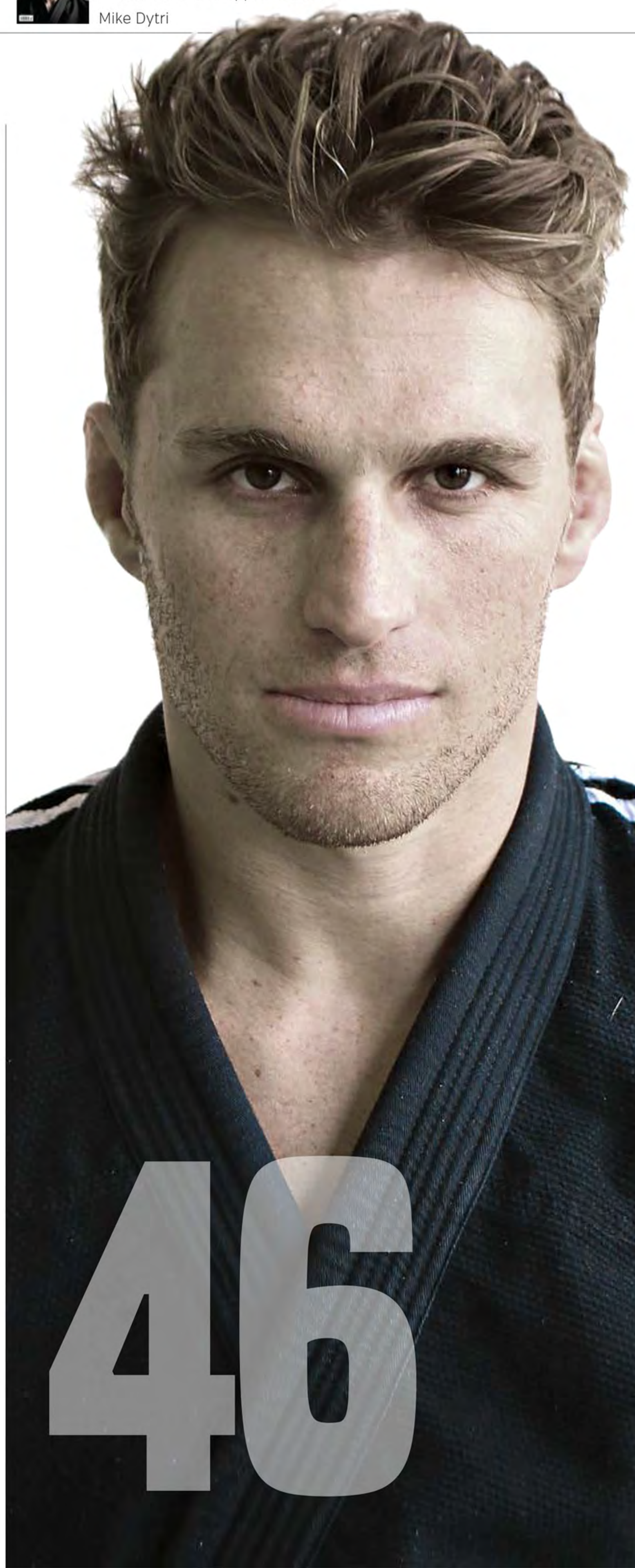

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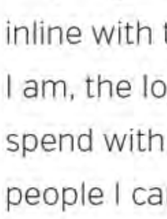
EDITORIAL

WHAT'S THE ONE THING?

IF YOU'RE READING THIS EDITORIAL, THIS MAGAZINE, THERE'S ALMOST A 100% CHANCE THAT YOU HAVE DISCOVERED JIU-JITSU. NOW, MAYBE YOU JUST BARELY STARTED, IN WHICH CASE CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER. However, if you've been rolling for more than a few months, by now you've probably discovered some of the benefits of jiu-jitsu. In my seven years of jiu-jitsu, it never ceases to amaze me how often I discover new benefits that I didn't know existed. I'm sure I'll uncover another to add to the list before I finish writing this piece. But just in case you need a little reminder, let me list some of the more commonly known benefits of jiu-jitsu. The first that comes to mind are the health benefits. If you do nothing else but train jiu-jitsu, your body composition will improve. Your ratio of lean muscle to fat will change for the better. If you're overweight, you will lean out. If you're lean, you will get stronger, your heart health will improve, your dexterity will get better, and your senses will heighten. What happens when your health improves? You get more selective on what you put into your body. The more time you spend on the mats, the more attention you'll pay to what you eat because you don't want negative effects on the mats. For this same reason, you'll probably drop those bad habits. If you smoke, you're not going to be able to keep up for much longer on the mats if you stick with that pack a day. If you drink, you might cut it short, otherwise you'll be reliving the night before the next morning when the alcohol is streaming through your pores. If you're addicted to ice cream (my personal vice), maybe forgo a scoop or two because it will make your goals on the mat that much more elusive. So, what happens to you when all these things come into play? Your confidence increases, maybe you're more apt to ask for that raise, or hit a sales goal, or ask out that guy or girl you've had your eye on. It's like the opposite of having cable (DIRECTV commercial reference). All of these things will surely happen if you continue to train jiu-jitsu. Why am I telling you all this now? I just finished reading a book called "The One Thing" by Gary Keller and Jay Papasan. It's a great book, I highly recommended it to anyone. The premise of the book is to often ask yourself, "What's the ONE Thing I can do right now/today/this week/this month/this year such that by doing it, everything else would be easier or unnecessary?" I'm writing this editorial a day before this issue ships off to the printer. My team and I still have a lot to do in the next 48 hours. However, this morning I asked myself the ONE THING question, and the answer was "go train jiu-jitsu". I made the time to go to class even though I could have come up with a million excuses not to. Instead, my body feels good, my mind is clear and I'm ready to get this issue wrapped up and in your hands on time. Going to class and training jiu-jitsu not only is going to make today go by easier, it's inline with the rest of my values. The healthier I am, the longer I live, the more time I'll have to spend with my family and those I love, the more people I can help, and so on.

With the new year around the corner and people beginning to think of resolutions, maybe this is something to put into play. When you have a decision to make on what to do with your time, ask yourself that question. More often than not you might discover that jiu-jitsu is the answer that will allow you to achieve more of your personal and professional goals.

Keep Rolling,



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TRAIN FOR LIFE

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NoGi World Champion
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IN FOCUS

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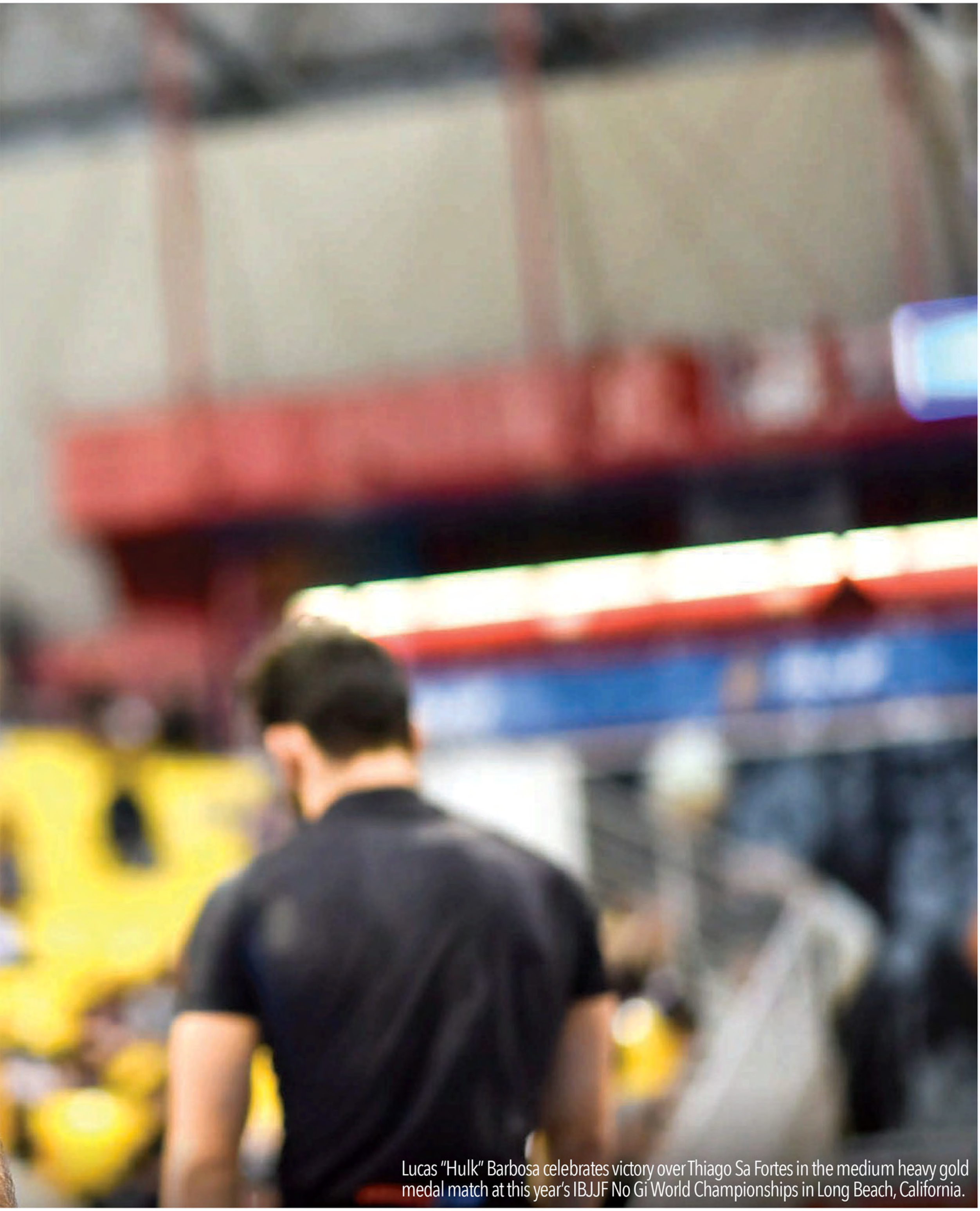

Lucas "Hulk" Barbosa celebrates victory over Thiago Sa Fortes in the medium heavy gold medal match at this year's IBJJF No Gi World Championships in Long Beach, California.

WEIGHING IN

BACK TO THE BASICS

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING CLEAN, ELEGANT, AND REMINISCENT OF THE OLD SCHOOL JIU-JITSU GIS, CTRL INDUSTRIES NEW TRE5ZERO GI IS FOR YOU. IT'S BASED OFF THE BASICS LINE, MADE OF 350 GSM TOP AND RIP-STOP PANTS. Great for competition or anywhere if you're looking to keep it simple. It's good after all to visit the basics every now and then.

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THE SPIRIT OF '96

Ricardo Liborio is a legendary jiu-jitsu competitor. Century Martial Arts is proud to introduce the '96 Especial Jiu-jitsu Gi. It's a tribute to Ricardo Liborio's championship performance and the first IBJJF World Championships in 1996. This gi's trim, fabric colors, and accents will catch the attention of any jiu-jitsu enthusiast.

CENTURYMARTIALARTS.COM

WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?

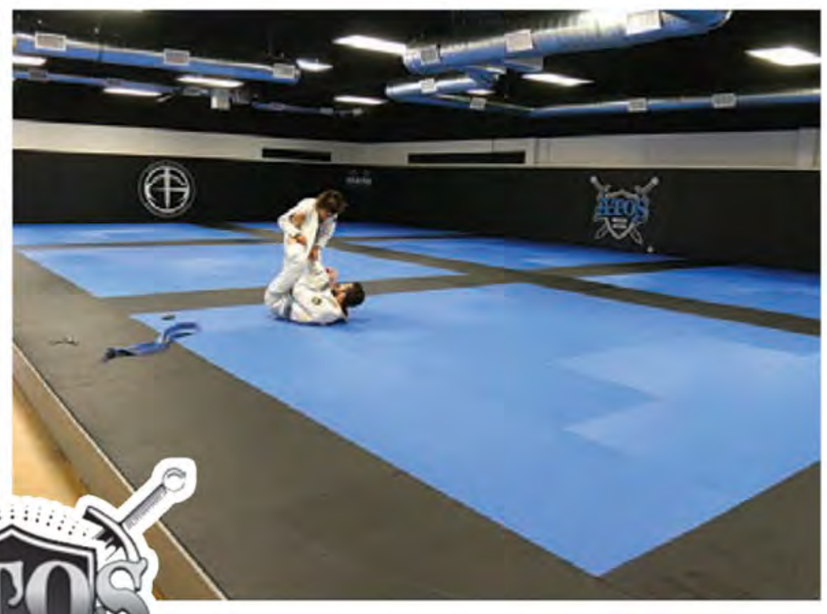
For the most part, jiu-jitsu is filled with fun loving, relaxed individuals. It's rare that the entire jiu-jitsu community expresses their dissatisfaction with anything, let alone a simple t-shirt. The UFC however released their "Discipline" series t-shirts that portrayed different martial art style with stick figures. The jiu-jitsu shirt in particular displays two stick figures in what is supposed to be some sort of jiu-jitsu technique but instead, it resembles a cave painting of what looks to be confused individuals. Who approved this?

UFC.COM

ATOS EXPANSION

It's been in the works for a few months now and it's finally complete. Atos HQ in San Diego has expanded to a much larger location. Their new facility hosts two very large mat areas complete with new FujiMats, spacious lobby, and restrooms equipped with showers. We dropped in recently to get a few pictures of the new new Atos HQ facility. We're looking forward to going down to roll with some of the best and talk to Andre about the expansion. Stay tuned!

ATOSJIUJITSUHQ.COM



ANTHONY BOURDAIN: PARTS UNKNOWN

The show Parts Unknown follows Anthony Bourdain on his adventures around the world. The author of the New York Times best seller, Kitchen Confidential, has traveled seemingly everywhere, is intelligent, and a great ambassador of jiu-jitsu. Having also just earned his blue belt, he's at that magical point in a jiu-jitsu student's career. He's just gotten past the hurdle of being a white belt and looking forward to the exciting journey ahead. In a recent episode of his hit show, Parts Unknown, Bourdain travels to San Francisco to train with Kurt Osiander. Check out the episode on CNN!

WEIGHING IN

HE'S BACK!

Short of crushing it with a giant mechanical press, or melting it with liquid metal, the terminators seem to be pretty unstoppable. Channel your inner terminator with Fusion Fight Gear's line of rash guards.

They offer several types of terminator branded rash guards that you can wear when you go looking for John Conner. What will they think of next?

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Keenan Rocks Hyperfly

Keenan Cornelius has joined the Hyperfly team. He's not alone, as fellow Atos teammates Josh Hinger and Kristian Woodmansee, also are part of the Hyperfly team. They continue to grow as a brand and company, producing some of the cleanest looking gis and rash guards on the market. Check out Hyperfly's website for more information on their gear.

DOORDIE.COM

Eat Films: Jiu-Jitsu VS The World

We all love jiu-jitsu documentaries. I'm sure everyone reading this has spent more than their fair share of time watching YouTube videos on jiu-jitsu. Eat Films has produced a feature length jiu-jitsu documentary called Jiu-Jitsu VS The World. It will be made completely free on YouTubebut a DVD or Blu-Ray can also be preordered from Eat Films via their website, www.eat-films.com/store/. You can go check out the trailer on Eat Film's YouTube channel.

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WEIGHING IN

FINDING COMFORT IN BAMBOO

Ever want to roll in bamboo? Well, now you can in the Hypnotik Bearimbolo Bamboo Gi. This gi is made from fabric derived from antimicrobial bamboo, and Hypnotik claims this is the most comfortable gi you will ever own. Those are some big words! It's a single weave, and from our first impression it's soft while still feeling fairly durable. It also comes with two sets of pants. For $249.99 you can be the most comfortable guy or gal in the entire academy.

BJJWAREHOUSE.COM

ABU DHABI GRAND SLAM

LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA IS HOME TO HOLLYWOOD, GOOD WEATHER, AND SOME OF THE BEST JIU-JITSU ATHLETES IN THE WORLD. ONE OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S TOP EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES, AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY (APU) WAS HOST TO THE UAE JIU-JITSU FEDERATIONS ABU DHABI GRAND SLAM. Taking place on October 18th, 2015 this even was a little different than other jiu-jitsu events I've been to in the past. It was clear that the Sheikh spared no expense for the Los Angeles Grand Slam.

PHILIPPINES. PRESENT DAY.

AN ORIGIN STORY
ART & TEXT BY:
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TO BE CONTINUED

WEIGHING IN

I originally made my way to APU's main campus before campus security informed me the event was being held at APU's west campus. As I made my way west, and began to see more people walking the sidewalk in gi pants, confirming I was going the right direction. Every time I'm going to a jiu-jitsu competition, I know I'm in the right parking lot when I begin to see cars with jiu-jitsu team logos or Newaza's "In Jiu-Jitsu We Trust" decal.

Just outside the Felix Event Center I saw a couple broadcasting trailers which I'm sure were broadcasting the event live in the UAE. Walking into the building I was met with no ticket takers. To my surprise attendance to this event was free. The elevated seating area offered a great view of the 7 mats no matter where you were sitting. Most spectators favored to stand next to the railing. This meant that coaches and teammates had to yell down and over the camera crew in order to get instruction out. It adds to the ambiance it just wouldn't be a jiu-jitsu tournament if I didn't hear, "put in your hooks" or "BOA!" yelled out at the top of a coaches lungs.

The athlete check in and bullpen were separated into its own large room. There was more than enough mat space for competitors to warm up, and chat with one another. I would have liked to see a live feed of the event going on outside but I was unable to find one in the bullpen. The organizers would call the athlete, they would be escorted to a smaller waiting area downstairs by the competition floor, and then wait their turn.

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I knew the event was not going to be the typical IBJJF event. The classic rock played over the sound system was a welcome change. I arrived as the tournament while the white and blue belt divisions were underway. Shortly after APU's cheer squad provided spectators with entertainment by showcasing flips, pyramids, and several other cheer techniques this jiu-jitsu student is simply unknowledgeable of. Never the less it was still a first for me at a jiu-jitsu tournament.

After the cheerleaders and marching bad cleared out (oh ya there was a marching band too), the black belts took the stage. I quickly spotted some familiar faces to the jiu-jitsu circuit like the Miayo brothers. I'm never too sure which one is which but I do run into them more than I see my own parents. They both did very well, with João taking 1st place in the Adult 62kg, and Paulo taking first in the 69kg division. In the 85kg, Tanner Rice defeated Gregor Gracie in the first round, eventually taking first in the division. Other familiar faces like Mackenzie Dern took first in the Brown-Black 62kg division, Alberto Crane taking 1st in the Master 2 85kg, and Roberto "Cyborg" Abreu Fiho was able to secure 1st in the open weight.

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PROMOTIONS

SIZE DOESN'T MATTER

SMALLER JIU-JITSU PRACTITIONERS OFTEN HAVE TO LEARN THE HARD WAY. UNABLE TO MUSCLE THEIR WAY OUT OF SITUATIONS, THEY RELY SOLELY ON TECHNIQUE. Kristy Ricchuiti stands only 5ft tall. She gets tossed around by plenty of higher belts and guys twice her size. Like a true warrior, she always gets back up, bumps fists, smiles, and is ready to go again. She recently received her blue belt from Shane Mock at Berks County Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. Way to go Kristy!

We Salute You!

Hector is a Paratrooper stationed out of Ft. Bragg, NC. He represents jiu-jitsu and trains soldiers everyday. Recently Randy P. Malacas, the head instructor and owner of Malacas Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, promoted Hector to the rank of purple belt. Congrats Hector!

You Can't Teach Perseverance!

After 4 ½ years at purple belt and 10 years of training overall, Chris Lattanzi has finally received his brown belt. Although he could have quit during his divorce,he plans to work even harder, continuing the jiu-jitsu journey that has changed his life and made him a better person. Rock on Chris!

OVERCOMING BULLYING

After having a bad experience with bullies at school, Tristan began training Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. It has had a positive effect on his confidence and self-esteem. As a child of parents in the military, Tristan moved around a lot, not having a chance to progress beyond grey belt for some time. After three years of hard work and commitment, instructor Kristen DeBruycker promoted Tristan to yellow belt at Pedro Sauer Academy. Keep up the great work Tristan!

PROMOTION

GROWING DIVERSITY IN BJJ

The youth champ in the photo is Spencer Warner. He's happy to see the growing diversity at Dojo1, a martial arts academy in Utica, NY. Their hard work has paid off with several medals at a recent tournament!

FINDING TIME TO TRAIN WHILE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

We forget, sometimes, that many people who train are in the armed forces. They train jiu-jitsu while being located all over the world to defend our freedom. Endure Jiu-Jitsu is about 30 miles outside of Tokyo on Yokota Air Base in Japan. These men and women work odd hours and still find time to train. Congratulations to Jerry Imasa (four stripe brown), Blanca Young (two stripe white), Lee Simpson (three stripe blue), Tiffany Carios (three stripe white belt), Von Carios (blue belt), and Booker Kawasaki (blue belt), all promoted by Master Reyson Gracie. Thank you to Bobby Williams, the Black Belt at Endure Jiu-Jitsu who brought us these great promotions!

ART OF THE DOJO GETS A BROWN BELT

At Renzo Gracie Charlotte, Black Belt Derek "Thundercat" Richardson awarded a brown belt to JM Smith. JM has been training jiu-jitsu and MMA for the past 9 years. The name may not ring a bell but you've probably seen some of his artwork in academies or on social media. He's currently teaming up with Deus Fight Co. on a limited edition gi that will help raise money for The Big Pygmy, an organization benefiting the Mbuti Pygmies of the Congo. Very cool!

SPECIAL SHOUT OUT TO ALL THAT SERVE IN THE ARMED FORCES AND TRAIN! THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO AND THANK YOU FOR READING JIU-JITSU MAGAZINE!

TAKING IT
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PORTION CONTROL 101

WORDS: **MACKENZIE ARRINGTON** | PHOTOS: **PATRICK FLORES**

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU HAVE FOUND YOURSELF FEELING STUFFED AFTER A MEAL BECAUSE YOUR EYES WERE BIGGER THAN YOUR STOMACH. *RAISES HAND* THERE IS SOMETHING SATISFYING ABOUT HAVING A TON OF DIFFERENT FOODS AVAILABLE IN YOUR FRIDGE BECAUSE YOU HAVE MASTERED BULK COOKING AFTER READING ALL ABOUT IT HERE IN JIU JITSU MAGAZINE. You did read that article right? But with every positive comes the negative. We may get home from a hard day of training and be ravenous and take double portions or we might not even understand what a proper portion looks like and are habitually over eating. This is ok, it is the same as being a blue belt and trying every submission, sweep and flavor of the week video that shows up on your news feed. We want it all; we are surrounded by too many options, but like on the mats, we need to tighten up our focus and use our will power. Portion control is the single most important aspect of eating well for the long haul. A large meal here and there won't make you bump up a gi size as long as you maintain proper portions for the majority of your meals. But how much should you be eating? What is a proper guideline on how much rice or pasta we can have without having to bust out the measuring cups? Well, luckily, there are a few tips and tricks that can help tighten up our portions. Let's roll.

JJM EATS

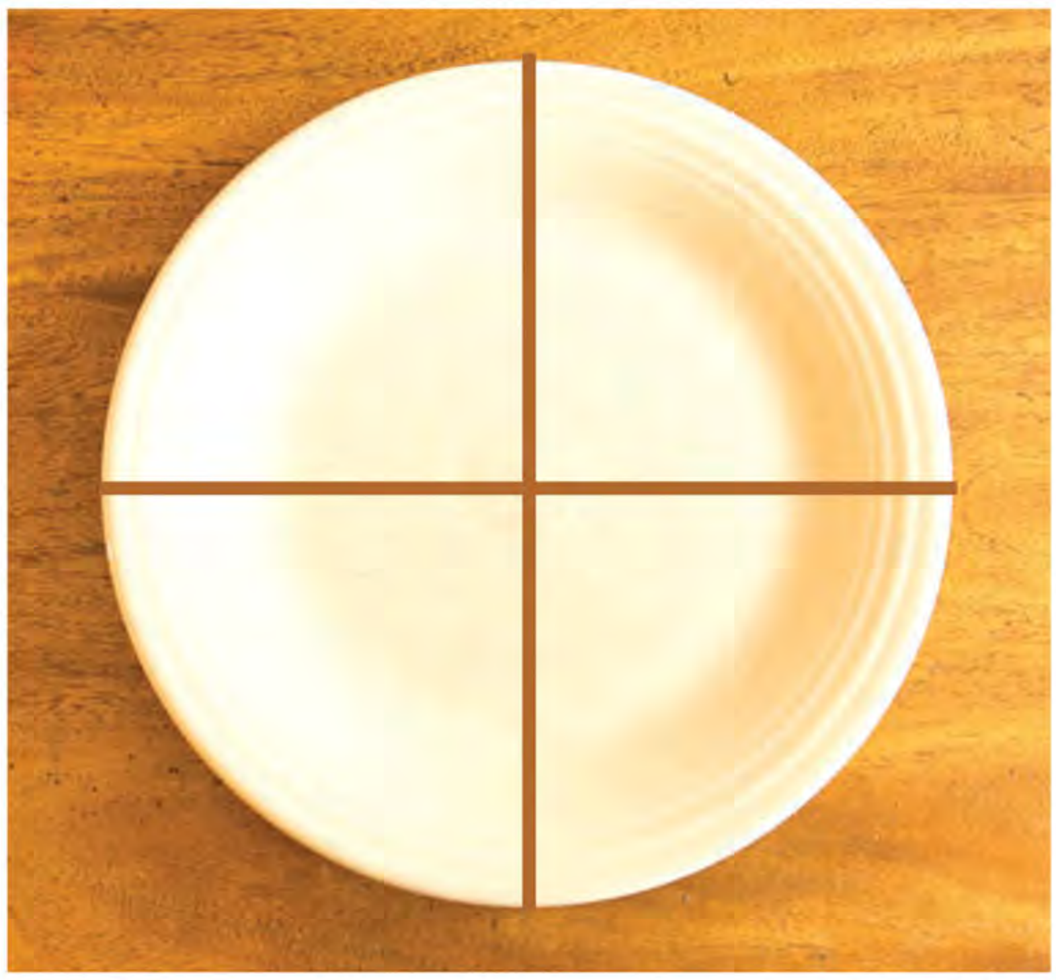
HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

We all are different shapes, sizes, and require different portion sizes. Caio Terra is not going to be eating the same sized portions as Abraham Marte. We would have to get into calorie counting, body mass indexing and all sorts of variables that nobody has time for, unless you are a professional athlete and at that point, you will probably have someone doing this for you. Leave the calculator at work, don't stress over reading every label, and definitely do not skip food groups. With the following tips, you can manage how much food you should be consuming in a sitting.

THE METHODS

A HAND-Y TOOL: Mother Nature gave us a ton of hidden tools that can be found right at the end of our wrists. Using different parts of our hand to "measure" different types of food will give an accurate guide on the size of a portion we should be eating on average. The variable with this method is obvious that if someone who is a featherweight somehow has massive hands, the method may be a little off. For the most part though, our hands scale with our body size, making this a good practice.

THINK IN QUARTERS: If you don't want to look like a weirdo staring at a piece of chicken, then back at your hand, then again at the chicken, you can subtly use the plate itself as a unit of measure. Think of the plate in quarters and use those quarters as "portions." This method works best if you are rational and do not try and cheat the system. Piling 4 pieces of steak into one quarter of a plate is not correct. Don't try and cut corners here, be reasonable.



PROPER PORTIONS

PROTEIN: The average portion size for protein is 4-6oz, based on the meat itself, or the equivalent to the size of a bar of soap. Busting out a scale or even worse, placing a bar of soap next to your food is not high on my priority list.

Hand: 1 palm

Plate: ¼ of the plate.

VEGETABLES: Leafy greens, broccoli, and asparagus all measure differently and are hard to fit into the 1 cup measure a serving should be. By using the hand or plate method, we can avoid that headache and load up on our vegetables without doing any math or smashing asparagus into a cup measure.

Hand: 2 fists

Plate: ½ of the plate a.k.a. 2 quarters of the plate.

CARBOHYDRATES: When we talk about the world of carbohydrates, it is crazy to think of weight measures because a ½ cup of blueberries weighs different than a ½ cup of cooked quinoa. The average serving size should be ½ cup.

Hand: 2 cupped hands

Plate: 1/4 of the plate.

❖ On the left is a dry cup of brown rice, on the right cooked. When reading portion labeling be sure to make note if the label's referring to a cooked portion or raw portion, depending on the food item.

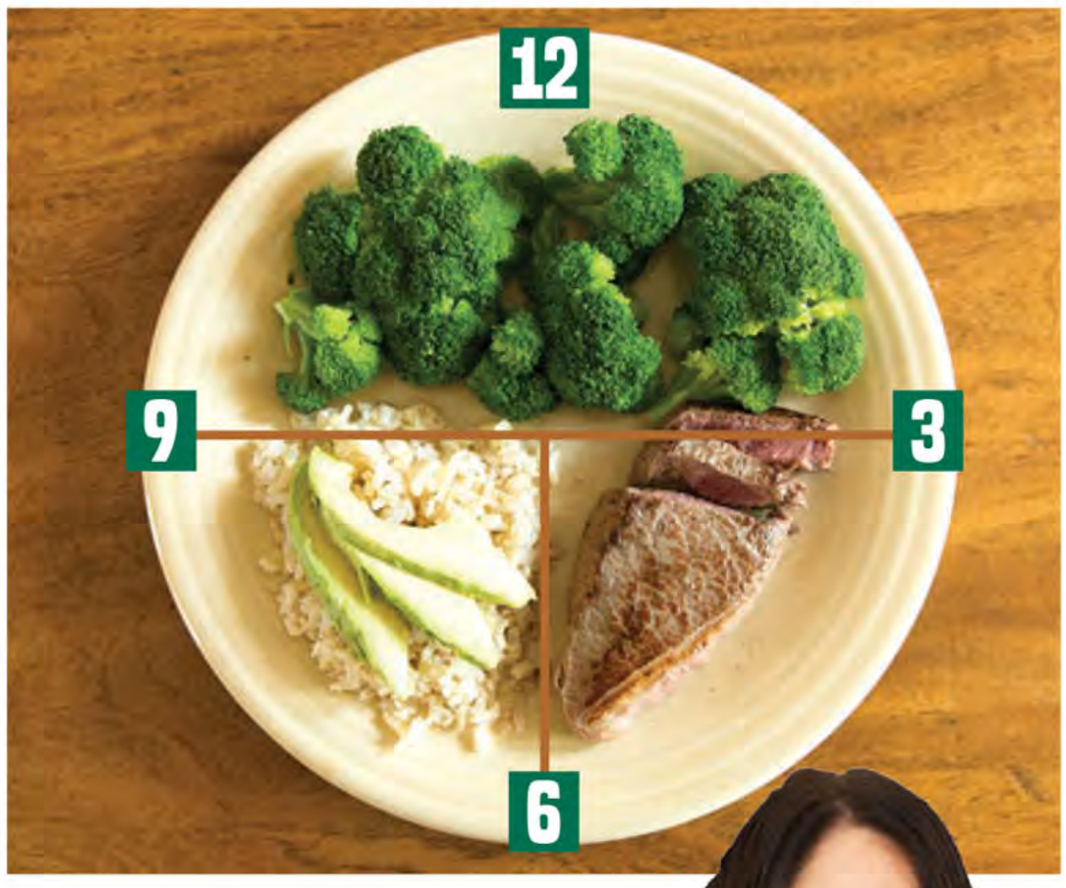
NUTS, OILS & FATS: This is where you begin to factor in olive oil, nut butters, and whole nuts and seeds. Most of the measures are tricky to obtain here. What exactly is a "thumb" of olive oil? So, use your best judgment here, or use small to-go salad dressing containers as a guide. You want 1 oz on average.

Hand: Thumb length

Plate: No measure, use your hand!

HOW TO EXECUTE

EATING IN ORDER: Think of your plate like a clock and eat clockwise. Always place your vegetables from 9 - 3 and start at 12. By doing so, you are forcing yourself to satisfy the initial hunger pangs by consuming the bulk of the meal that you are the most likely to skip. Then work to your carbohydrates and then work through your protein. By finishing with the last remaining portion of vegetables, you are more than likely not going to leave the table still hungry.



TAKE YOUR TIME: Turn off the TV, close the laptop, and lock your phone when you are eating. Savor every bite and take your time chewing your food. Not only will you find that you are going to eat less and be less hungry afterwards, but also the more you chew your food, the easier it is for your stomach to break it down, which will yield in more nutrients. Oh, and strengthening your jaw may save you from a misplaced choke one day.

VEG OUT: If you find yourself hungry after finishing your meal, instead of fixing yourself a full second plate of what tasted best [which usually is the food that is the least good for you]. go and have a second portion of vegetables. Nine times out of ten, this will fill up that remaining space you had in the tank and you will gain even more nutrients from your fruits and vegetables.

FOREVER ON POINT

You should never be eating to feel stuffed. Think about what eating truly is; it is a way to fuel your body by replenishing vital nutrients burnt throughout living. When your car is full of gas, do you keep trying to pump more in? You sure don't. By portioning properly, you will be eating enough to bring your tank back up to full but not over. Eat when you need to eat and not out of boredom. If you find yourself still hungry after a meal, let it settle for a few minutes and then wait and see how you feel. We all are different shapes and sizes with different energy levels and outputs throughout daily activities, thus requiring different portions. By using this guide, you will take a lot of the math and measuring out of the equation, and be left feeling fueled rather than full. For some awesome recipes to fuel up with, make sure to check out grapplergourmet.com and ultimately: Eat well. Train hard. Oss.

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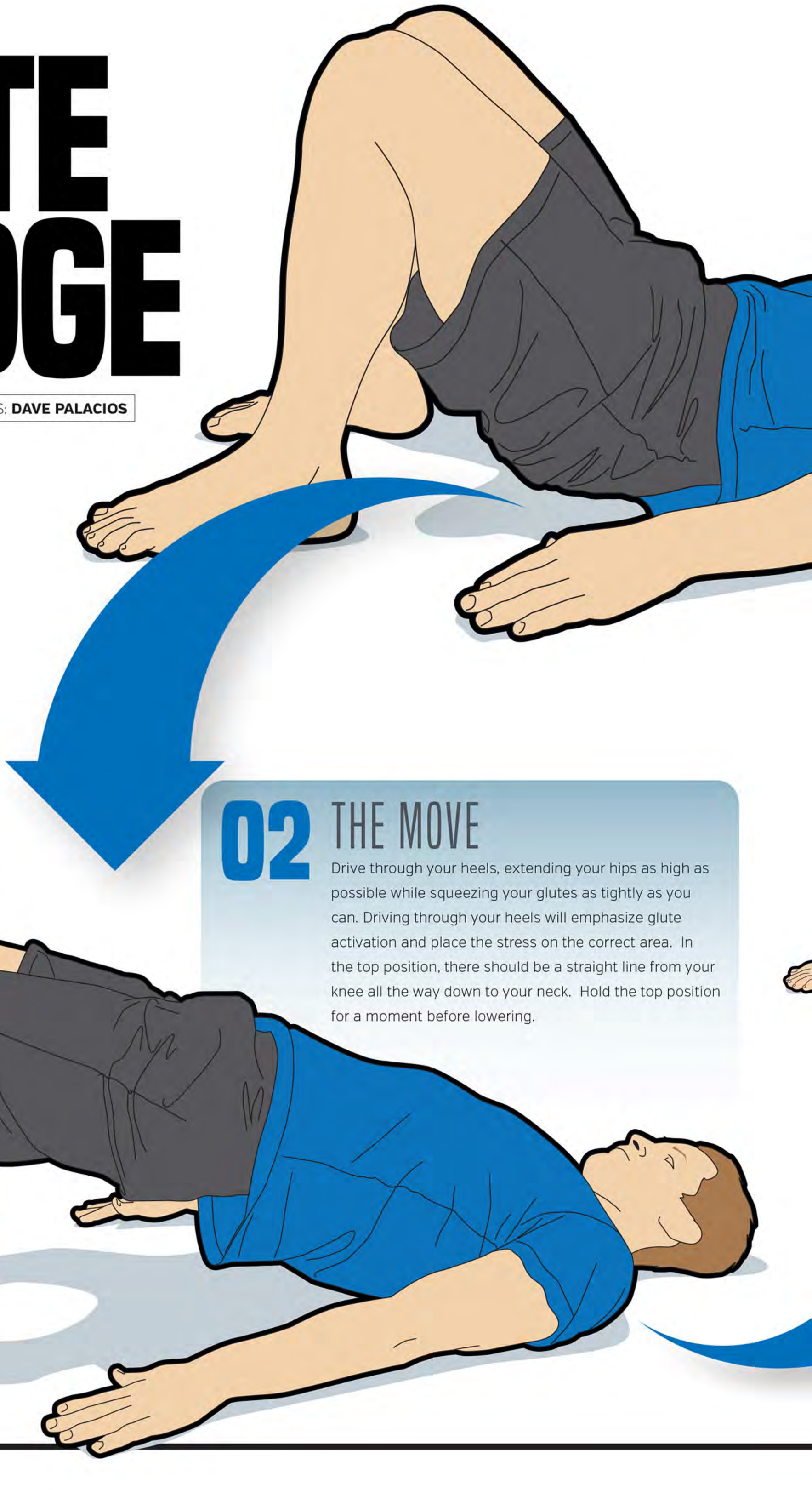
RICARDO LIBORIO
2015 ADCC ABSOLUTE WORLD SUPERFIGHT CHAMPION

GLUTE BRIDGE

WORDS: **WILL SAFFORD** | ILLUSTRATIONS: **DAVE PALACIOS**

THE GLUTE BRIDGE IS A FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT THAT SHOULD BE IN EVERY GRAPPLER'S TOOLBOX. WHEN DONE PROPERLY, THE GLUTE BRIDGE IS A GREAT WAY TO WARM UP THE POSTERIOR CHAIN INCLUDING THE GLUTES, HAMSTRINGS, AND LOWER BACK. When done with weight[s] or on one leg, it can help build muscle, strength, and power, as well as minimize asymmetries of the hips and legs. This is useful for injury prevention of the lower back, maintaining good posture, and for escaping dominant positions like mount and side control.



02 THE MOVE

Drive through your heels, extending your hips as high as possible while squeezing your glutes as tightly as you can. Driving through your heels will emphasize glute activation and place the stress on the correct area. In the top position, there should be a straight line from your knee all the way down to your neck. Hold the top position for a moment before lowering.

01 STARTING POSITION

Lay on your back with your knees bent, feet shoulder width apart, and your heels close to your glutes. Your hands can be out to the sides at 45-degree angles, palms up or down.

03 FINISHING POSITION

Lower your hips back to the ground at an even tempo, not allowing them to crash back to the floor. It isn't necessary to touch your glutes to the ground with every repetition however lower them down far enough to get the full range of motion of the hips.

VARIATIONS

Depending on how your feet are positioned, you can emphasize different parts of the posterior chain. Placing your feet further away from the glutes will target the hamstrings and bringing the feet in as close as possible will target the lower back. How far apart your feet are from each other will have a similar effect. Feet farther apart will target the outside of the glutes and feet closer together will target the inner glutes. You can experiment with different positions, however, as a warm up, you should try a few sets in different positions to warm up the entire area. To warm up or exercise each glute individually, try raising one leg off the ground and performing single leg glute bridges. This will also help balance out any asymmetries in the area.

Prescription:

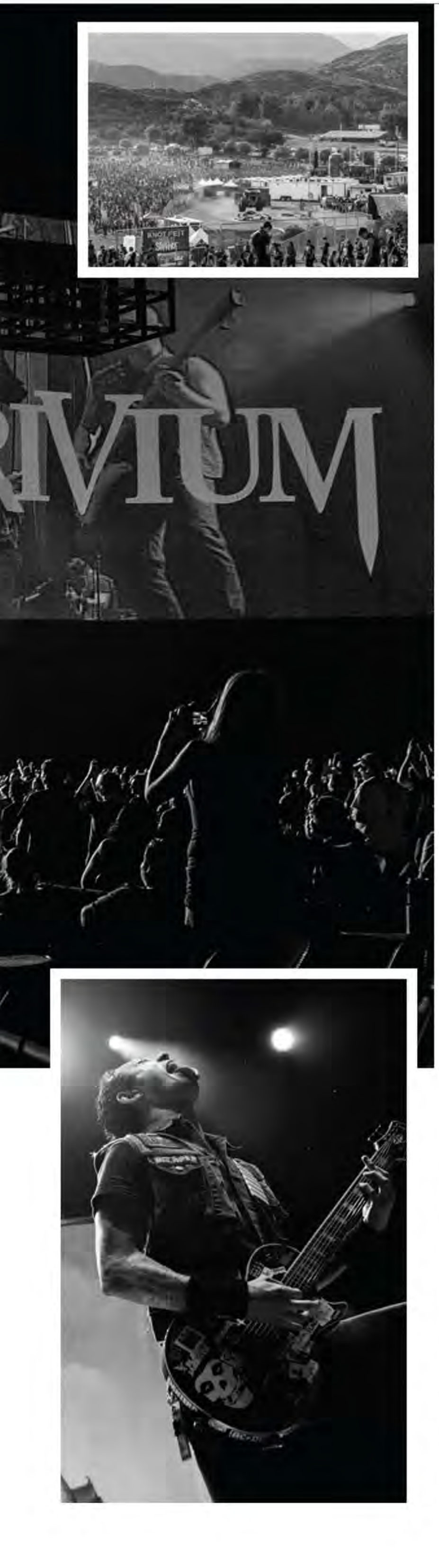
As a warm-up, shoot for 3 sets of 10 repetitions with each set using a different position of the feet. As part of a workout, use 3-4 sets of 5-15 reps depending on the goal [5-7 reps for strength, 8-14 reps for size, 15-30 reps for strength endurance and stability.] Concentrate on driving through the heel for maximum glute contraction.

ROCK-JITSU

Jiu-jitsu Meets Heavy Metal

WORDS AND PHOTOS: **PATRICK FLORES**

"MUSIC, YOU KNOW, TRUE MUSIC, NOT JUST ROCK 'N' ROLL – IT CHOOSES YOU. IT LIVES IN YOUR CAR, OR ALONE, LISTENING TO YOUR HEADPHONES – YOU KNOW, WITH THE VAST, SCENIC BRIDGES AND ANGELIC CHOIRS IN YOUR BRAIN." – LESTER BANGS, ALMOST FAMOUS



NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE TELLS YOU, ROCK STARS...ARE NOT NORMAL PEOPLE. IF THEY WERE, WE WOULDN'T CALL THEM ROCK STARS. What makes them so different? To find out, I took the red pill, visited Wonderland, and got a small taste of how deep the rabbit hole goes. This was the closest I will likely ever come to an Almost Famous experience, taking place at Knotfest, a heavy metal music carnival.

Driving up to the San Manuel Amphitheater for Knotfest, I really didn't know what to expect. I was familiar with metal music through bands like Metallica whose albums I listened to in high school, over 10 years ago. I felt like a polar bear in the desert, and very much out of my element. Fortunately, I was there to cover something we are all familiar with - jiu-jitsu. Amidst all the long hair, tattoos, and black clothing, I was still able to recognize the adidas Jiu-Jitsu pants worn by Billy Graziadei from the band Biohazard. Along with being the lead vocalist for the band, Billy holds a brown belt in Gracie Jiu-Jitsu and trains out of Gracie Academy in Torrance, CA. Billy was accompanied by Scott Visomi, a long time student of the martial arts, heavy metal fan, and student of Clark Gracie. Among their ranks I also met Ty Gay and Patrick Nolan of Everybody Panic! Ty is a lead vocalist for the band and a Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Black Belt. Patrick, the gifted bass player from the same band, is just starting jiu-jitsu and going through the learning process we all go through as white belts.

Billy, Scott, Ty, and Patrick were ready to get some training in backstage but we were waiting for one more to join the party. As we made our way to the back lot, we stopped by an RV. The same RV's you see on the highway and wonder, humm, I wonder if someone famous is in that thing? I was introduced to Matt Heafy, the guitarist and lead singer of Trivium. Matt's a Gracie Barra blue belt from Florida, who just so happened to be performing that same night. He likes to get some training in before the show. In the Trivium trailer there was some jiu-jitsu conversation any nerd of the sport would appreciate. In particular, I found their use of jiu-jitsu to supplement their music to be quite interesting. I'd heard similar conversations within the jiu-jitsu community, reminding me it doesn't matter if you flip burgers or play to a crowd of thousands, jiu-jitsu brings us all together.

Shortly after some stimulating jiu-jitsu dialogue, we were ready to roll. It was a beautiful Southern California day and perfect for some outdoor grappling. In true jiu-jitsu fashion, Billy and Matt brought some mats with them that we were able to set up in a grassy area behind the main stage, close enough to hear the faint sound coming from the secondary stage where some performances were already going on. After some quick stretches, the day's training got underway.

Ty Gay, our resident Black Belt, exhibited a great X-Guard escape for us to try. It first involved breaking the grips your opponent has on your sleeves, regaining posture, and then following up by quickly stepping over your opponent's head to move into a side control position. He also demonstrated a couple variations to a familiar cross collar choke that emphasized using the blade of your hand, cutting the right angle, and utilizing a liftin hip motion. I felt right at home on the mats as we rolled and learned technique for an hour. I almost forgot I was in the back lot of a concert and in the company of rock stars, only to be reminded when we had a couple visitors.

Several people stopped by to see what the heck was going on. Some looked confused, others amazed, but all were interested enough to stop and ask. It seemed like many were familiar with grappling through watching wrestling at one point in their lives. To most, however, the concepts of jiu-jitsu were foreign. At one point during our training session, an interested man stopped by and Billy was polite enough to invite him onto the mat. The demonstration seemed to impress that fellow enough that a couple minutes later he showed up with his wife. Now, I'm no musician or actor, so the number of attractive women approaching me, willing to jump into the

"IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU FLIP BURGERS, OR PLAY TO A CROWD OF THOUSANDS, JIU-JITSU BRINGS US ALL TOGETHER."

mounted position is next to none. For these guys, however, I could only imagine it being a more regular occurrence, making that voice in my head repeat, "Damn, maybe I should've been a rock star."

Like all time spent on the mat, a couple hours passed quickly and Matt had to leave to get ready for the show. We bowed out and put the mats away. After getting cleaned up, it was time to explore the venue. Knotfest stimulated all the senses. The smell of marijuana and the flavor of a $16 can of Heineken, I am all too familiar with. Visually, however, this dreamland was closer related to a scene out of Mad Max than the storybook tales Alice or Dorothy described, this a brand new experience for me. Heavy metal music played as monster trucks demolished cars, dirt bikes soared through the air, and even roller coasters hung suspended upside down. As the sun set to the west over the hilly landscape, the sea of heavy metal fans began moving to the main stage. I followed in suit and made my way to the pit area.

As I looked behind me I saw thousands of people. One girl right behind me held up a sign saying, "I only came here for Trivium" confirming to me I was, in fact, in the right place. As the lights dimmed, the crowd began to let out a humble roar, only to explode as Matt Heafy made his way center stage. It put a smile on my face and made me think, "Wow, is that the same guy I rolled with a couple hours ago?" With the single stroke of his guitar, he was able to command more respect and cheers than most will experience in their lifetime. The same way words can't explain what it's like to roll with Marcelo Garcia or Jean Jacques Machado, no words could really ever explain the feeling of being dead center stage of a Trivium performance. It's simply just something that you have to experience. It was at that point I realized that there is something special that sets rock stars and jiu-jitsu superstars apart from others.

These are people who, above all else, follow their dreams. At one point in life we all have aspirations and dreams but so many of us choose a path of least resistance for fear of failing. These dreams, either through self-doubt or a manifestation of the reality around them, morphs dreams into delusions. Rock stars, instead, walk or better yet, sprint, dive, crawl, and live on the road less traveled. They're able to turn dreams into reality. The qualities needed to accomplish such a feat are admirable. Thus the reason why when people look for inspiration, they look to those on stage. They're the center of thoughts, envy, and desire for all who gaze upon them. They're rock stars.

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IBJJF NO GI W

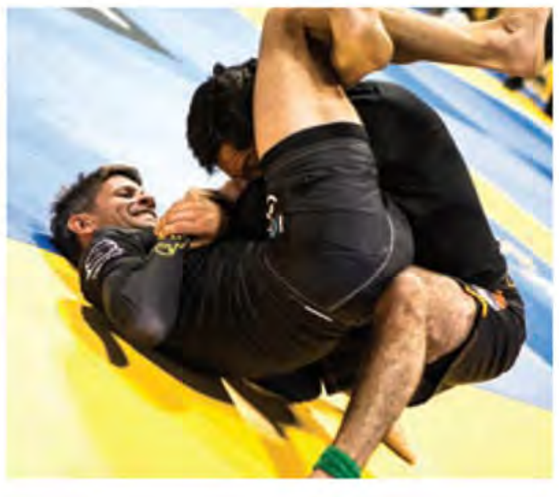
WORDS: & PHOTOS: **PATRICK FLORES**

THE WALTER PYRAMID IN LONG BEACH HAS BECOME AN ALL TOO FAMILIAR PLACE FOR ME. THIS YEAR WAS A BIT COLDER THAN OTHER TIMES I'VE VISITED, BUT I WAS STILL GREETED WITH THE SAME FAMILIARITY AS IN THE PAST. From the faces of the IBJJF staff, to the nachos that upset my stomach, the venue has become jiu-jitsu's Madison Square Garden. Walking down to the mat area, you'll find typical nervous competitors, pacing back and forth as they wait for their fights to begin. Every so often, you'll be greeted with the occasional "thump" of one jumping up and down next to you as he warms up or possibly tries to intimidate his opponent. I could now easily go to sleep to the usual yells of the coaching staff and chants of each team but catching the occasional whiff of bad odor I'll never grow accustomed to!

This year, the No Gi Worlds did not disappoint and brought with it the same feelings of familiarity and excitement. Some of the most memorable moments included Felipe Pena taking home double gold, winning both the heavy, and open weight divisions and in the female division, Mackenzie Dern earned her 4th world title this year with a gold in the Female Open Weight Division.

❖ Jessica Oliveira was on everyone's radar after a big win over Gabi Garcia at ADCC. At the No Gi Worlds, she pulled off a suplex against Samantha Cook in the Open Weight match, later earning a win by armbar. Samantha took home gold in the Middle Weight Division earlier that day. Both are great competitors that I'm sure we'll be hearing about in the future.

❖ Joel Tudor of Studio 540 won the black belt, Master 2, Lightweight Division with a triangle choke. Joel really went for the submission in all his matches, making him exciting to watch.



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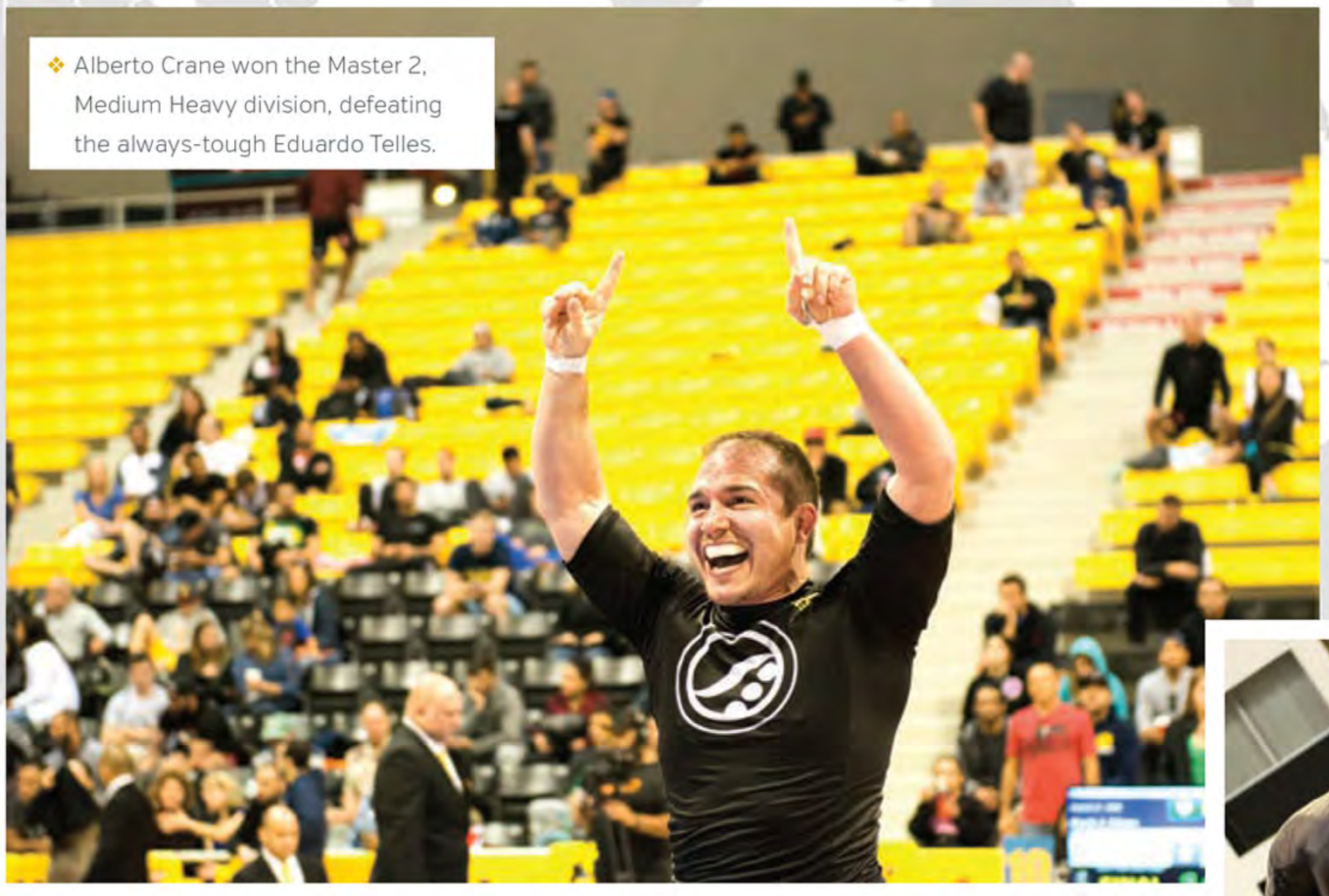
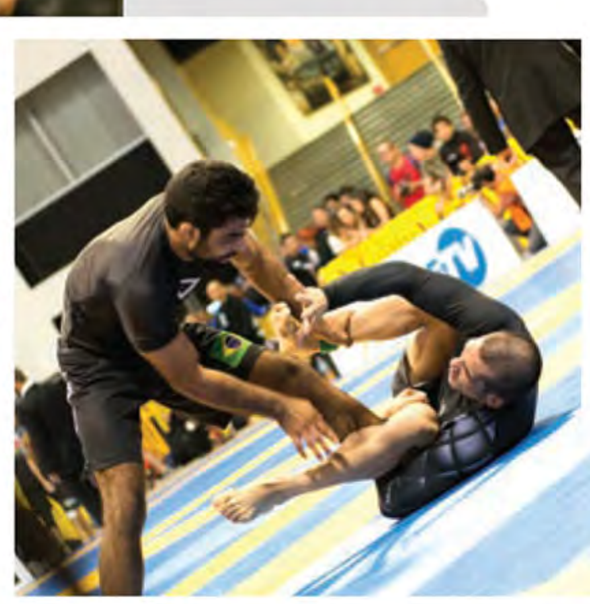
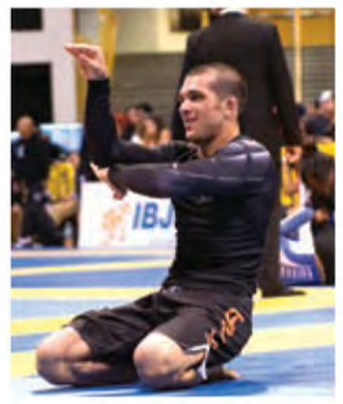


❖ Alberto Crane won the Master 2, Medium Heavy division, defeating the always-tough Eduardo Telles.

❖ Owner of Studio 540, Robert Zeps, also took gold in the Master 4, Ultra Heavy division, submitting his opponent with a knee bar.





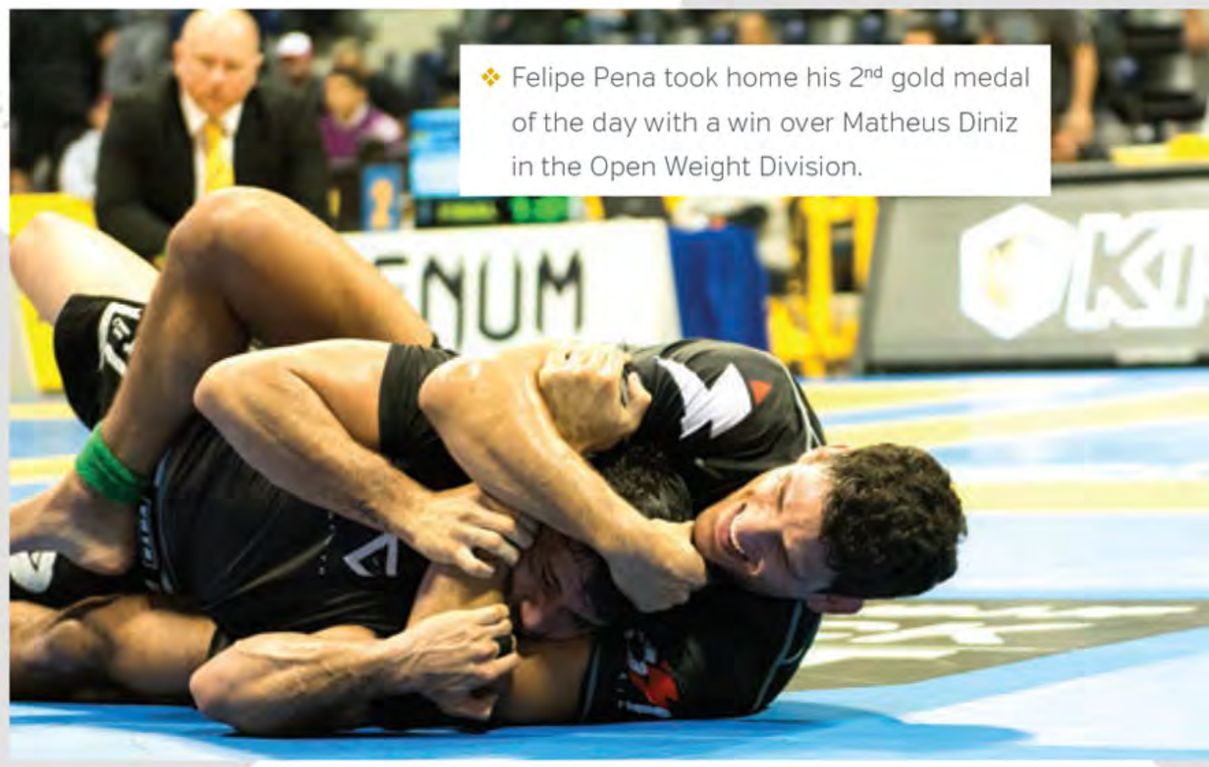
❖ DJ Jackson of Team Lloyd Irvin won top honors at middle weight, defeating Jonathan Satava and Otavio Sousa to do so.

❖ Michael Langhi's flexible guard game earned him Lightweight Gold in a great competitive match with Mansher Khera. Khera put up an outstanding performance, but in the end, Langhi prevailed. I'm sure we'll be seeing more of both competitors in the future.

❖ Atos' Lucas Barbosa took first in the Medium Heavy Division.

❖ João Assis of Team CheckMat was able to defeat multiple time world champion, Roberto Alencar of Gracie Barra, for gold at super heavy.

❖ Team CheckMat also earned gold in the Ultra Heavy Division with a win by Gabriel Lucas.



❖ Felipe Pena took home his 2nd gold medal of the day with a win over Matheus Diniz in the Open Weight Division.

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We've seen a lot of her celebrating this year!

- Finally, for the 4th time this year, Mackenzie Dern took home a world championship winning the Female Open division.

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- Tammi Musumeci of Atos was able to beat Mackenzie Dern in the Featherweight Division to win gold.

- Her first time competing in no gi, Atos' Angelica Galvao takes home gold in her division.

FULL RESULTS

Black Belt Adult Males

ROOSTER

1. Caio Terra - Brasa CTA
2. Yusuke Homma - Carpe Diem
3. Leandro Lopes Escobar - Soul Fighters BJJ
3. Jorge Elias Bucaram Santistevan - Alliance

LIGHT FEATHER

1. João Miyao - PSLPB Cicero Costha
2. Samir Chantre - Samir Chantre BJJ
3. Thomas Lincoln Correa Lisboa - Alliance
3. Rafael Freitas - Gracie Barra

FEATHER

1. Augusto Lopes Mendes - Soul Fighters BJJ
2. Osvaldo "Queixinho" Moizinho - Gracie Fighter
3. Gianni Grippo - Alliance
3. Paulo Miyao - PSLPB Cicero Costha

LIGHT

1. Michael Langhi - Alliance
2. Mansher Khera - Alliance
3. Thiago Cardial Gaia - Barbosa JJ
3. Thiago Aragão de Abreu - CheckMat

MIDDLE

1. DJ Jackson - Team Lloyd Irvin
2. Jonathan Satava - Alliance
3. Otavio Sousa - Gracie Barra
3. Marcelo Mafra - CheckMat

MEDIUM HEAVY

1. Lucas Daniel Silva Barbosa - Atos Jiu-Jitsu
2. Thiago Sá Fortes Silva - CheckMat
3. Matheus Diniz - Alliance
3. Charles Negromonte Santos - Gracie Barra

HEAVY

1. Felipe Pena - Gracie Barra
2. Jackson Sousa - CheckMat
3. Felipe Menezes Bueno - Alliance
3. Arnaldo Maidana de Oliveira - CheckMat

SUPER HEAVY

1. João Assis - CheckMat
2. Roberto Alencar - Gracie Barra
3. Guybson Sá - SAS Team USA
3. James Puopolo - Ribeiro Jiu-Jitsu

ULTRA HEAVY

1. Gabriel Lucas - CheckMat
2. Mahamed Aly Santos da Silva - Team Lloyd Irvin
3. Roberto "Cyborg" Abreu - Fight Sports
3. Gustavo Dias Elias - Gracie Humaita San Diego

OPEN CLASS

1. Felipe Pena - Gracie Barra
2. Matheus Diniz - Alliance
3. DJ Jackson - Team Lloyd Irvin
3. Mahamed Aly Santos da Silva - Team Lloyd Irvin

Black Belt Adult Females

LIGHT FEATHER

1. Patrícia Fontes - CheckMat
2. Chelsea Bainbridge-Donner - Atos Jiu-Jitsu
3. Kristina Barlaan - Brasa CTA

FEATHER

1. Tammi Musumeci Atos Jiu-Jitsu
2. -Mackenzie Dern - Gracie Humaita
3. Ana Michelle Tavares Dantas - Equipe Zero
3. Emilie Maxine M. H. Thylin - Gracie Humaita South Bay

LIGHT

1. Karen Borges - CheckMat
2. Kiri Noelle Liao - Ribeiro Jiu-Jitsu
3. Josephine Masiello - Peter de Been JJ

MIDDLE

1. Angelica Galvao - Atos Jiu-Jitsu
2. Amanda Loewen - SBG International (SBGI)
3. Megan Ann Nevill - Alliance

MEDIUM HEAVY

1. Andresa Correa - Alliance
2. Leanna M Dittrich - Fight Sports
3. Monique Ricardo Carvalho - CheckMat

OPEN CLASS

1. Mackenzie Dern - Gracie Humaita
2. Andresa Correa - Alliance
3. Emilie Maxine M. H. Thylin - Gracie Humaita South Bay
3. Tammi Musumeci - Atos Jiu-Jitsu

Team Results

ADULT MALE

1. Atos Jiu-Jitsu
2. Aliance
3. Gracie Barra

ADULT FEMALE

1. Aliance
2. Gracie Barra
3. CheckMat

MASTERS

1.Gracie Barra
2. Alliance
3. Brasa CTA

JUVENILE

1. Atos Jiu-Jitsu
2. Gracie Barra
3. Alliance

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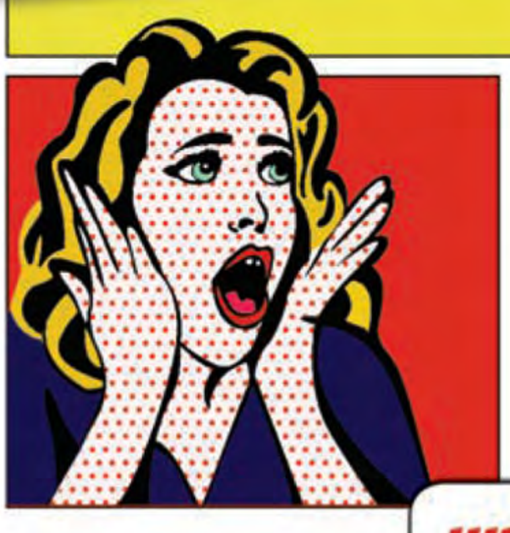

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THE ART OF THE REFEREE

WORDS **DAVID KARCHMER**

REFEREEING IS A LOT LIKE THE JIU-JITSU JOURNEY. JUST LIKE A WHITE BELT, EVERY REFEREE STARTS OUT AS A NOVICE AND HAS TO WORK OVER A LONG PERIOD TIME TO GET TO A LEVEL OF HIGH PROFICIENCY. And even once attained, it is a set of skills that needs to be continually practiced and honed or it will fade away.

As humans, we accept the fact that we cannot be perfect in everything we do. It's unlikely few can claim that their grappling training went flawlessly, or a competition went without a single error. Yet, it's a benchmark that is expected from the referee.

So since even the best referees make mistakes, here's a list of 10 reasons why they happen when they do:

❖ The IBJJF Rule book is the most commonly referred to rule set in jiu-jitsu competition.

IMPERFECT KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES

It might be surprising that learning the written rules of a tournament organization should be considered only rudimentary. Having a signed rules seminar certificate is simply not enough to be considered having a comprehensive knowledge. Firstly, not all organizations take the time to publish an elaborate set of written rules or offer rules training, which can leave large gaps in understanding. Additionally, even written rules can be open to interpretation, and the result is a lack of clarity or confusion.

And when you consider the dynamic nature of grappling, you can imagine an infinite number of scenarios that make it difficul to account for how to treat all of them. It's easy to believe that tournament organizations spell everything out, but they can't and they don't. The reality is that referees often need to be detectives to get to the bottom of what rules are or how they are to be correctly enforced. If not, you'll see both mistakes and inconsistencies in rules enforcement.

❖ At the 2015 Worlds the IBJJF experimented with a video play back concept.

02 RELUCTANCE TO IMMEDIATELY ANALYZE AND CORRECT MISTAKES

Accepting imperfection or admitting errors is challenging for anyone. Referees make decisions all day that are scrutinized and reviewed by those around them. Referees have to have the internal moral compass to want to do what's right, which means the willingness to recognize and accept their own gaps in knowledge or poor judgment. After accepting the fact mistakes will be made, recognizing mistakes and taking immediate corrective action is an important set of skills.

03 PRESSURE FROM OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

Coaches, competitors, instructors, and parents are all willing to share their opinions during competition(s). It's important for a referee to have the confidence to hear often rude and crass opinions and not be manipulated by them. While it might make sense to simply block those outside voices out, it actually can serve as valuable input, particularly in error correction if used effectively. But whether it's literally during or after, a referee's job is to offer impartial application of the rules, free from manipulation.

❖ Everybody sees it differently it seems.

OBSERVING UNFAMILIAR POSITIONS

All referees have a fair to substantial amount of time invested in their own grappling training. Within their own training, they develop their own style, or at least most readily accept the styles taught or shown to them over time. This means some referees are just not exposed to 50/50 or Berimbolo style guards, some don't train a lot of leg locks, don't have an intricate gi game, or maybe have more self-defense based jiu-jitsu. This can have an impact on their familiarity with the intricacies of certain positions. In some cases, it may even help decide how they score partial positions or make referee's decisions if they see games they don't play or don't particularly care for. But it's a referee's responsibility to take himself outside his comfort zone and make himself a true student of the sport and accept grappling styles in their entirety.

❖ No one has seen every position possible.

05

LACK OF ATTENTION TO NECESSARY DETAILS

Sometimes, competitors are very evenly matched and the smallest of details can decide the outcome. Referees that stand at a far corner of the ring with their arms crossed are doing a disservice. Always staying close by and focused on the action, noticing grips, watching for safety concerns, and carefully recreating positions will ensure that even the smallest details of a match are properly addressed within the rules.

❖ It's critical that referees keep their attention focused during the match not only to make the right call but for the safety of the competitors.

06

FATIGUE

Refereeing can be a long day. Not all organizations can afford to substitute referees every hour. This means a referee could face 10 or more hours on his or her feet, maybe with just a single lunch break. Much like being a competitor, a referee needs a good night's rest the day before a tournament, needs to eat properly throughout the day, and stay hydrated. Otherwise, it is easy to get tired and lose focus, which is the impetus to mistakes, poor calls, and a bad disposition.

07

DISTRACTION

Having referees that simply don't focus on their own mat while running a match is an obvious no-no, but sometimes distractions run deeper. Things like an argument with a loved one, a disagreement with a coach during the day, or just not feeling well can all play a role in preventing a referee from being 100% focused on the task at hand. A referee's job is very mentally taxing, needing high levels of concentration throughout the day, so distracting thoughts in their head can easily lead to errors. Referees need to do their best to clear their heads and be ready for business at all times.

08

PRIDE

Pride can be defined as a high opinion of one's own importance or superiority, and is really the reflection of a referee's self-respect. So sometimes when disputes arise and calls are challenged, it's natural for the referee(s) to be defensive to preserve their self-esteem. The question becomes if this sense of pride overwhelms the moral compass of what can be considered "correct" clouds the referee's judgment. The concern is not necessarily that mistakes are made, but rather if the referee is able to objectively overcome these feelings, correct errors, and not be so defensive that they are blinded. Much like jiu-jitsu's concept of "leave your ego at the door", the most successful referees moderate their pride with humility when trying to score a match.

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09

BIAS OR FAVORITISM

Previous periods in competition history saw greater evidence of bias and favoritism. While favoritism is no longer as responsible for bad offic ting as some may think, there is still a portion of the referee population that cannot be fully objective. Allegiances to teams, friends, students, even nationalities, can all play a factor and impact the outcome of a match. While it should not have a place in the sport and there are steps that can be taken to minimize it, it's not something easy to remove from human nature.

10

LAZINESS

Refereeing is a job like any other and put simply, some people do not like to work and are not good at their job. Lazy referees always seem to be on break, they arrive late and want to leave early, and their rings run slowly. Just like any bad employee, lazy referees need to be identified and not offered the opportunity to display their lack of work ethic in the future.

FINAL DECISION

One major difference between average referees and great ones is not whether or not they make mistakes - it's how often. While it's an honorable goal to be infallible, a referee needs to accept the inevitability of mistakes and understand the reasons that they're made to minimize that frequency. The best referees not only recognize their few mistakes, but also look to take immediate action to correct them. So perhaps the ultimate goal of the referee should be making competitors feel confident that their matches are being judged correctly by someone serious about being good at what they do.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David 'Silverfox' Karchmer is a 1st Degree black belt and has been training for over 15 years. David's martial arts background spans over two decades and includes a black belt in Tae Kwon Do that he received in 1993. His jiu-jitsu journey began at Gracie Thornwood, NY in 1999 after he took a seminar with Royce Gracie and knew he was hooked on the art. In addition to training and instructing, David has focused the last seven years on offic ting grappling competitions and has offic ted over 3000 gi and no-gi matches at over 60 events for multiple organizations. He is a previous head referee at Grapplers Quest, current head referee at FIVE Grappling, and routinely offic tes events around North America.

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CLARK GRACIE JIU-JITSU

THE KIMURA GRIP

with CLARK GRACIE

WORDS: **MIKE VELEZ** | PHOTOS: **MIKE DYTRI AND MIKE VELEZ**

WE FIRST CAUGHT UP WITH CLARK GRACIE A COUPLE YEARS AGO. HE WAS COMING OFF A BIG WIN AT THE PAN AMS AND ALL THE PUBLICITY FROM HIS NOW FAMOUS MEME THAT CIRCULATED THE INTERNET. In fact, Clark even did a guest appearance on Good Morning America following that. A lot has happened since that first interview with Clark. He's opened two academies in San Digeo, his school affil tion has grown internationally, he's gotten engaged, and he is going to be a father next year. In Hollywood, some actors will get typecasted into roles that are similar to their breakout role, the role that made them famous. I think it's pretty safe to say that when you think of Clark and his jiu-jitsu, you probably think of an Omoplata. Clark's okay with that. He's one of the best in the business when it comes to that finish. I felt like a grappling dummy rolling with Clark while thinking, "don't give him the Omoplata" the entire time. Three or four shoulder locks later, I had had enough. For this technique, Clark shared with us a look at his Kimura Grip game. Some people refer to this as the Kimura Trap. Whatever you choose to call it, it's effective. Along with the basics, Clark shows us a number of effective finishes and transitions with the Kimura Grip.

BEING CLARK

The first time I interviewed Clark, he answered plenty of the usual questions: How long have you been training? When did you start? etc... Over the years, I've gotten to know Clark a little better. My initial suspicions that he was a pretty nice guy have been confirmed over the years. This most recent interview with Clark felt more like us just hanging out rather than an interview. Clark was born in San Francisco, the son of Carley Gracie. Clark moved to Brazil as a teenager then returned to California to finish high school. His first competition was at the age of 18, which was the US Open, in Santa Cruz, California. Most of his jiu-jitsu training came from his father Carley, son of Carlos Gracie Sr., Carley gave Clark his foundation. Clark recounted a story when he was a teenager training outdoors, mats covering a grass field and a blue tarp providing just a bit of elusive shade in the hot sun. Clark continued training while his father went out into the neighborhood to recruit the biggest, baddest guy he could find - a giant who was about ten years older than Clark and also a blue belt. The moment Carley returned with his new friend Clark knew what was next. The smaller, younger Clark managed to submit the goliath with a Mata Leao [Rear Naked Choke]. In fact, the Mata Leao would be the most common conclusion to any street fight Clark couldn't avoid back then. Clark recognizes the importance of having your jiu-jitsu being applicable in real world situations. Despite the fact that he's a regular on the sports jiu-jitsu circuit, Clark regularly teaches self-defense techniques at his schools. These real world, close combat techniques that have been passed to Clark from his father Carley are what originally brought the Gracies to the United States. In the early seventies, U.S. Marines stationed at the U.S. Consulate in Rio trained with Carley and invited him to Quantico, Virginia to train Marines in close quarters combat. Carley was the first Gracie to set up here and remained, eventually settling in San Francisco, California, where he still teaches at his academy today.

Clark's desire to compete came after moving back to California and training under Rodrigo Medeiros at BJJ Revolution Team; this is where Clark's jiu-jitsu was sharpened for competition. Over the years, Clark has won many titles, including a No Gi Championship, Pan Ams Championship, multiple National Championships, and more. Today, along with his own training, he's begun to build an impressive competition team with jiu-jitsu fighters like Brandon Magana, Rafael Dallinha, Brandon Walensky, Brian Morizi, and others. Clark's academy in Old Town San Diego serves as home base to the team with a second school not far away in La Jolla. In addition to a solid mix of traditional and sport jiu-jitsu, Clark's schools also teach Judo with Judo instructors Nic Casacaddan and Dru Ferguson. Clark thinks of his stand up game being more wrestling based but he has a few judo throws that he's pretty good at. Currently, Clark's association has six affil tes with plans to open another six in 2016.

Off the mats, a lot has been going on for Clark. He and his fiancé, Gigi Angelini Moon, have been engaged for over a year now and will be husband and wife by the time you read this. Gigi has a successful modeling career in Asia. The two are also proud to announce that the newest Gracie will be here in April. It's a given that Baby Gracie will be on the mats in no time. Clark explained that growing up in his family, there was no particular time when it was decided that you would learn the clinch or passing the guard. It was just something that was done in the family. A Gracie baby's progression looks something like sit-up, crawl, pass, walk. Today, Clark is also associated with bjj4change.org, which is an organization that produced a travel documentary film that combines a jiu-jitsu camp with some top athletes to focus on jiu-jitsu and its benefits. The documentary will air on Netflix and ESPN International to raise awareness and funds to help the kids in the favelas of Brazil. Clark is joined by Robert Drysdale, Braulio Estima, Rigan Machado, Penny Thomas, and his cousin Rolles Gracie. You can find out more at **www.bjj4change.org.**

You can find out more about Clark, his schools, his association, and more at his website **www.clarkgracie.com.** Let's get to the techniques!

RAW DATA
Powered by BJJ Heros

Full Name:
Clark Rouson Gracie

Lineage:
Mitsuyo Maeda > Carlos Gracie Sr. > Carlson Gracie > Carley Gracie > Clark Gracie

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Pan American Champion [2013]
- World No-Gi Jiu-Jitsu Champion [2009]
- New York Open Champion [2010]
- 3x American National Champion [2010, 2006, 2005]
- US National No-Gi Champion [2009]
- 1st Place World Professional Jiu-Jitsu Cup Trials [2010]
- World No-Gi Silver Medallist [2007 brown]
- Pan American Silver Medallist [2010 brown]
- World Championship Bronze Medallist [2011]

FAVORITE POSITION/TECHNIQUE: Omoplata and Crucifix
WEIGHT DIVISION: Peso Medio [82kg/181lbs]
TEAM/ASSOCIATION: Carley Gracie Team

"THE KIMURA GRIP LOOKS PRETTY SIMPLE BUT THERE ARE A LOT OF LITTLE DETAILS THAT GO INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS CONTROL."

KEYS TO THE KIMURA GRIP

The Kimura Grip looks pretty simple but there are a lot of little details that go into the effectiveness of this control. It's a position of leverage. With the proper grip established, you have a tremendous amount of leverage over your opponent. The details go into where you grip, how you grip, where your arms are in relation to your opponent's arm, and the position of your wrists.

An important key to this grip is where you grab onto your opponent's arm. Clark likes to place his middle finger near his opponent's wrist. This is a placement that allows for maximum leverage while not going too far towards the hand that it can be removed easily. If you grab too low on the arm, near the elbow, your opponent can extend his arm and reduce the effectiveness of the control. Also, Clark likes a five-finger-over-the-top grip versus using the thumb under.

❖ Too high on the arm and they can stretch out to break the control.

❖ Middle finger near the bend of the wrist.

This same rule applies to where you grab your own arm. In this example, Clark is starting from side control and he's using his left hand to control Brandon's right wrist. Next, Clark threads his right arm underneath Brandon's arm to grab his own wrist. Clark wants to grab his own arm at the wrist; if he's too far up the forearm, he has less leverage.

Lastly, like other grips, the position of your wrists is vital. As soon as you get a grip of their wrists and your wrist, it's important to roll your wrists forward - think of the opposite of revving a motorcycle. This movement places tension immediately on their joints and gives you more strength in your control.

The Kimura Grip can be gotten in multiple positions. For the example shown here, you want to make sure that you keep your opponent's triceps tight against your body. This will give you greater control throughout the movement and the finish.

KIMURA CONTROL PASS

STEP 1

Brandon is laying back, which gives him a wide range with his legs to impede Clark's ability to pass. To increase the odds, Clark reaches in for Brandon's collar and pulls him up into a sitting guard position.

STEP 2

Now that Brandon is sitting up, either by Clark's direction or his own, he has less range to block with his legs. Now, Clark wants Brandon to be heavier on his legs. To do this, he reaches over Brandon's shoulder with his right hand and grabs the middle of Brandon's back, placing his weight on him and pushing him down. At the same time, Clark grabs Brandon's right knee.

STEP 3

Clark wants Brandon to post his right hand to the mat. To smoke this out, he fakes a knee slice. Brandon posts his right hand to the mat.

STEP 4

As soon as Clark sees that hand post, he goes for a forward roll over Brandon's shoulder, grabbing Brandon's right wrist with his left hand. As Clark is performing the roll, he brings his right arm under Brandon's to connect with his own wrist.

STEP 5

After the roll, Clark has a Kimura Grip on Brandon's right arm, however, Clark is technically on the bottom. The important thing here is not to panic - Clark has control. Clark pushes Brandon's wrist into his stomach, at the same time, Clark is placing his elbow and arm against Brandon's head while his left thigh is up on Brandon's left shoulder.

KEY POINTS

In this position, Brandon is stuck. Clark has plenty of leverage on Brandon. If Clark doesn't put that hand on the stomach, let's say he were to pull it up at this point, Brandon would have enough room to turn into Clark.

STEP 6

Now, Clark does a quick hip escape to his right to get out from under Brandon.

STEP 7

Clark immediately scissors his legs so that he can get his knees to the mat and close against Brandon to keep him down.

STEP 8

Clark doesn't want Brandon flat on the mats so he bases out with his left foot, brings his head down and drags Brandon across the mat and underneath him, against his right leg.

STEP 9

As soon as Brandon is under Clark, he doesn't hesitate to finish with that Kimura Grip. Clark brings his left leg in, with his knee down in front of Brandon to control him, pulls up on the arm, and then forces Brandon's hand behind his back to finish.

KEY POINTS

The finish comes quick. Clark doesn't want Brandon to wage any type of defense.

When Clark finishes, he's tight on Brandon so that he can't get out from under.

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STEP 4

Clark falls back his right leg while pinching Brandon's left arm with his left leg.

STEP 5

If Brandon's arm feels a little loose, which is likely, he'll let go of his grip and bring his left hand to pull back on Brandon's triceps.

STEP 6

With the arm pulled back, Clark readjusts his legs, locking down the reverse triangle with a nice tight grip, then brings his hand back to the Kimura Grip of the arm.

STEP 7

Once the arm's locked tight in the triangle, Clark points his toes up, as if he was stretching his calves, and squeezes his knees to finish the triangle.

BONUS

OPTIONAL FINISHES

This triangle has a pretty high probability to finish, but if your opponent is able to defend the triangle for whatever reason, there are some options.

ATTACK THE TRAPPED ARM

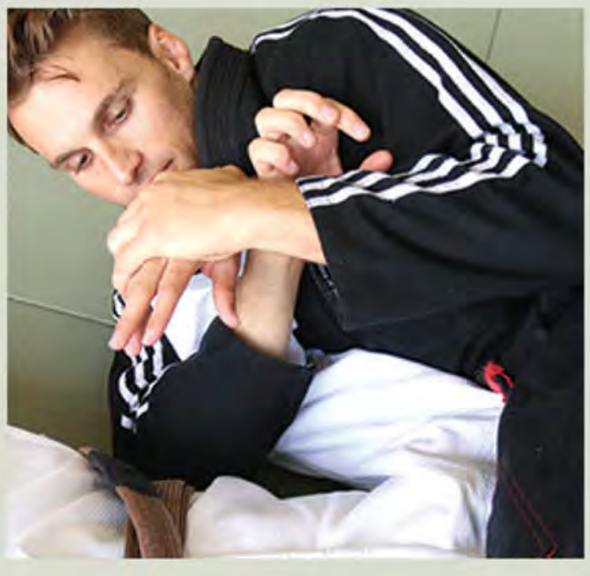
There's a nice shoulder lock that is performed by Clark grabbing the captured wrist with his left hand and pushing down and away on that trapped arm.

There is also the option to wrist lock that captured wrist. Just make sure that you keep the triceps locked into the triangle.

ATTACK THE KIMURA GRIP ARM

Clark keeps his Kimura Grip but allows Brandon to get his elbow on the mat, all while keeping the grips tight. Clark pinches his right elbow against Brandon's so that he has nowhere to escape.

Once the elbow is on the mat, Clark moves his attention to the hand to bend it forward, first with his left hand, then with his right to perform a two-handed wrist lock on Brandon.



KEY POINTS

On the wristlock, slowly work your grip of the wrist up to the hand. This will allow you to get a grip of the hand first before they react to the wristlock.

CHOKE TO ARMBAR FROM KIMURA GRIP

With the Kimura Grip of the arm, there are lots of options to attack if your opponent continues to defend the most obvious Kimura attack. In this case, Brandon is continuing to hold his collar and being extremely defensive.

STEP 1

Clark steps his left foot over in front of Brandon and brings his inside thigh tight against his shoulder.

ONLINE VIDEO **PLAY VIDEO**

STEP 2

Next. Clark quickly steps up with his right foot just to Brandon's side then quickly sits back, all while holding onto his Kimura Grip.

STEP 3

Clark's first option is an armbar. For this, he keeps his left leg heavy over Brandon's head and keeps a lot of pressure against Brandon's right forearm with his grip. Also, Clark is using his right arm to put some upward pressure against the right arm in hopes of breaking it free from Brandon's grip.

STEP 4

If the arm hasn't come out yet, Clark leans a little bit to his left to give himself space to bring his right leg over and in front of Brandon. Once it's over, if he can, Clark will cross his legs while keeping his knees together.

STEP 5

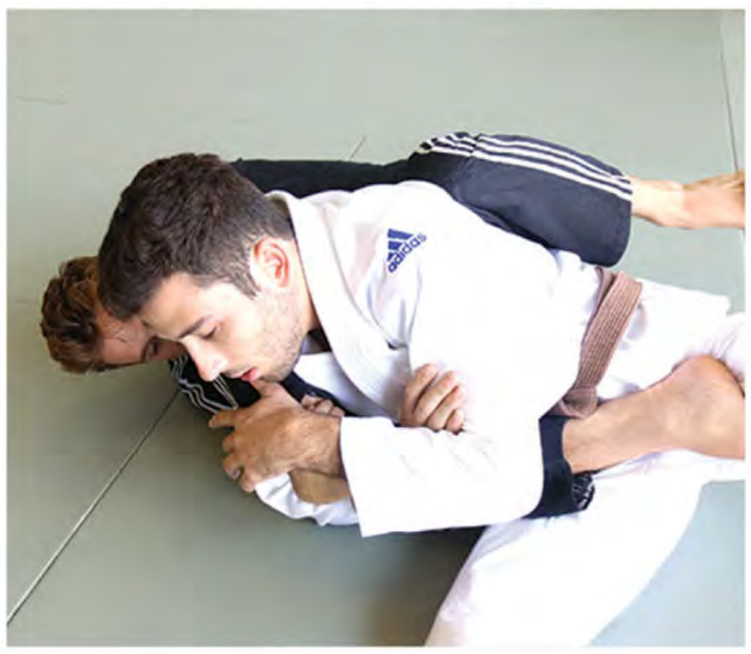
At this point Clark could expend a lot of time with various grip breaks to free that arm for the armbar. However, he decides to go with a choke instead. In which case Clark loosens his legs a little bit and brings his right foot to the inside of Brandon's left thigh. It's important that he contacts the palm of his foot with his thigh; Clark doesn't want to get his foot between Brandon's legs.

STEP 6

Now Clark falls to his right side, his Kimura Grip brings Brandon up on top of him. At this point, Clark lifts his l ft leg up and ver Brandon. Brandon is thinking, "What a stupid move Clark, now I'm going to get on top!", but that's exactly what Clark wants him to think.

STEP 7

As Brandon is looking to turn toward Clark, Clark bumps him far forward with his left knee against his back. This pushes Brandon further forward than he wanted to. Once Brandon is forward, Clark brings his left foot around Brandon's body to get in the second hook.



STEP 8

Clark's in a good spot, he's got the back (points), and still has his Kimura Grip. Now, he brings his left arm up and against Brandon's face with his elbow, dragging his elbow across his face. Yes, this makes it very uncomfortable for Brandon. As Brandon is looking away, Clark lets go of his grip and gets a grip of Brandon's lapel - thumb in.

STEP 9

Thanks to the arm across the face, Brandon can't wait to get his head out from under. Clark lets him pass through and what do you know, he's got the collar choke.

STEP 10

To finish the choke, Clark uses his left foot to help push Brandon down, then moves his right hook to the far hip.

STEP 11

Clark is continuing to make sure his left arm is behind Brandon's head. Then he brings his left leg over Brandon's left shoulder, clamps it down, and brings his right leg up to lace his legs together. Now to finish it, all Clark has to do is keep his grip of the collar under Brandon's chin and extend his legs.

KEY POINTS

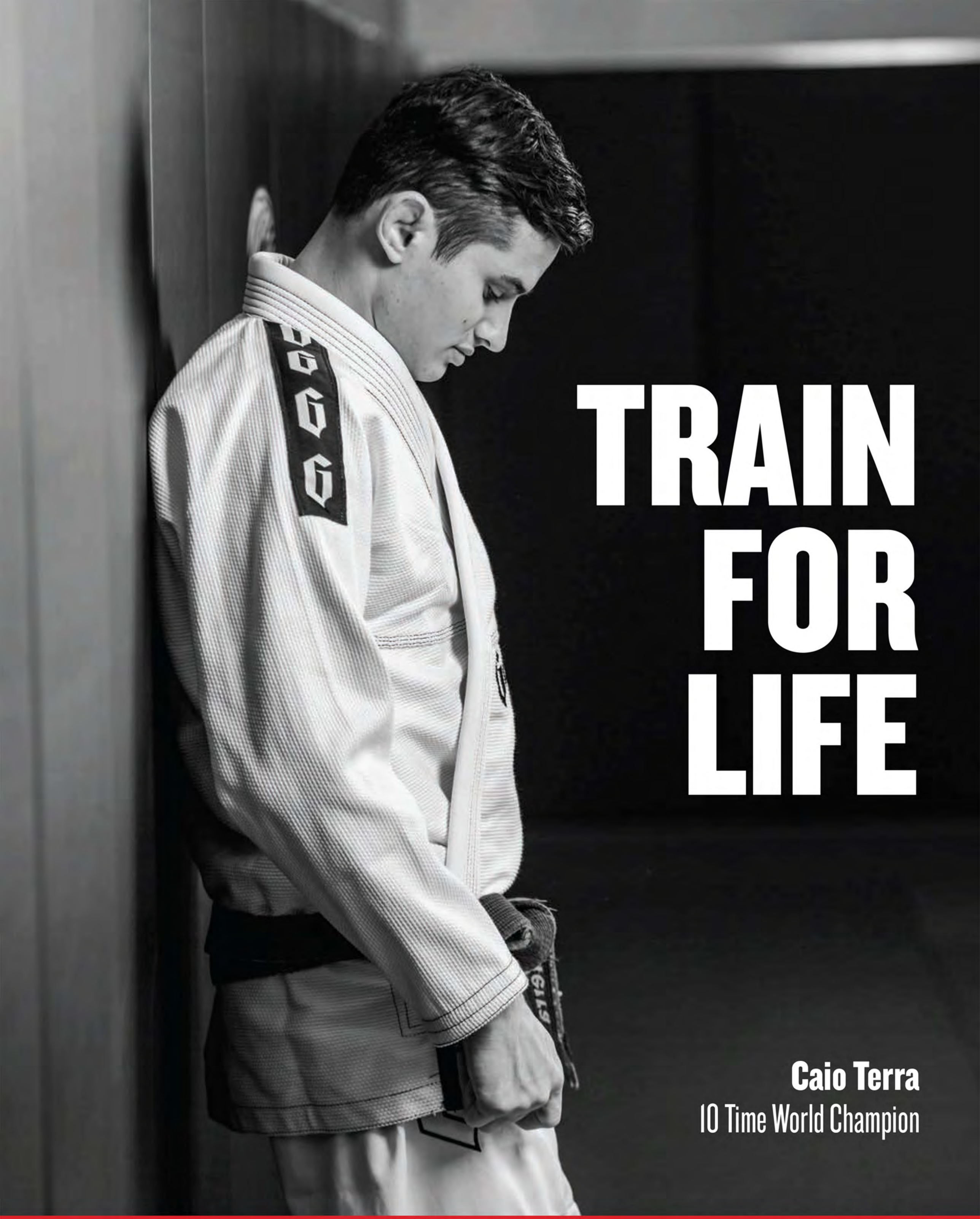
When crossing the leg over the shoulder, it's important that the top leg is the one against the shoulder and is underneath the crossing leg. Otherwise, there's too much space and your opponent might not feel the effects of having the leg on the shoulder.

BONUS

ARMBAR OPTION

If anything goes wrong with the choke - you lose your grip, or the arm gets too high on their head, you have the option of going back to the armbar.

To do this, all Clark has to do is bring his left leg over and across the front of Brandon's face. Clark never lets go of his right arm across Brandon's captured arm. With the leg over, Clark hips forward to pressure Brandon away, his arm slides into position, and Clark can finish with the armbar. At this point, it's highly unlikely that Brandon's thinking about defending the armbar after that attack on the neck.



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SHOULDER AND FOREARM LOCK

This is a finish that Clark will use if his opponent is grabbing his belt to defend the Kimura. It's both a shoulder lock and a forearm crush that can do some serious damage if your opponent/training partner doesn't tap. So be aware of that when using in training.

STEP 1

Clark has the Kimura Grip and Brandon is defending by holding his belt. Clark pulls back on the grip and brings Brandon's grip of the belt to his side. Since the belt is mobile, this works.

STEP 2

Clark wants Brandon's right hand on his hip, palm down. This is a good spot because Brandon still feels safe from the Kimura. At this point, Clark lets go with his left hand and shoots his right hand deep underneath Brandon's elbow. Clark continues to keep Brandon's hand glued to his hip with his left grip.

STEP 3

As soon as Clark gets his right arm through, he shoots his left arm over and around Brandon's forearm. Clark grabs his left tricep with his right hand and grabs his right tricep with his left hand. Brandon's wrist is trapped in the corner with Clark's left elbow.

STEP 4

Once Clark has the grip of the arm locked up, he'll walk his knees and hips to his right - walking Brandon's back flat to the mat along with Clark's elbows.

STEP 5

Clark brings the weight of his left hip to Brandon's right shoulder while posting his right foot to the mat. This keeps Brandon glued to the mat and unable to turn in or away.

STEP 6

To finish, Clark twists his upper body, bringing his weight into Brandon's forearm while lifting the elbow up. Clark isn't trying to lift the shoulder; instead, he's driving his weight onto Brandon's right forearm with his forearm.

The based out right foot allows Clark to transfer a lot of force onto Brandon's forearm.

This finish puts pain on both the shoulder and the forearm. Exercise caution when performing this technique. Clark has seen people break their arms because they failed to tap in time with this technique.

This technique is not a bicep slicer however it could be seen as a wristlock, in which case, it would be legal only for blue belts and up.

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FINGER TAPE

WORDS: **WILL SAFFORD**

YOU MAY HAVE SEEN SOME GUYS AT YOUR SCHOOL TAPE THEIR FINGERS BEFORE CLASS, OR WATCHED JIU-JITSU STARS LIKE MICHAEL LANGHI AND ANDRE DO BATTLE WITH A GRIP FULL OF TAPE. HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHY THESE GUYS TAPE THEIR HANDS AND HOW TO DO IT CORRECTLY? This guide will shed some light on the reasons why we tape our fingers before training and will offer a few methods on how to tape properly. Finger taping is not rocket science, but there are some useful tips and tricks to help you get maximum benefit from your efforts. The last thing we want is a tape job that doesn't provide support or falls off within the first five minutes of class. Before we learn how to tape, let's look at why we tape.

WHAT YOU NEED

The best tape for jiu-jitsu is adhesive, non-elastic sports tape, which can be purchased at your local sporting goods store, pharmacy, or online. Rolls can be bought in different widths like ½", 1", 1½", etc. For taping the fingers, it's best to use ½" or smaller. Some athletes like to buy larger width rolls so they can use the tape on other larger joints, like the wrist and ankle, and cut the tape down to ¼" or ½" for taping the fingers. A pair of scissors also makes things easier, but is not necessary.

WHY TAPE?

PROTECT INJURIES

It is most common for athletes to tape their fingers when they are injured. Whether the fingers are slightly sprained or recovering from a full-on fracture, taping helps to support, stabilize, and minimize movement of the taped finger. Typically, when you injure a finger, it's painful to move it in a specific direction, like bending it forward for example. Placing tape around and on the backside of the injured joint via "X-Taping" (which we will cover) will prevent it from bending forward, thus limiting pain. In the case of pain from lateral, or side-to-side, finger movement, taping two fingers together via "Buddy Taping" will provide for maximum stability of a finger and limit its individual movement. So, taping can help you brace a new injury, minimize aggravation to an old chronic injury, and overall, aid in the healing of an injured finger.

PREVENT INJURIES

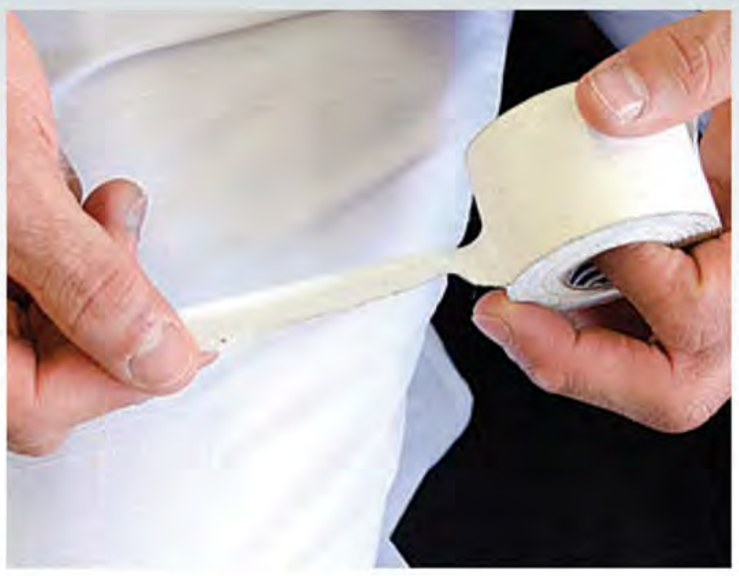
If you're serious about grappling, then chances are you train frequently and have inevitably twisted, bent, or bruised a finger or two. Mangled fingers are as common as cauliflower ears in our sport, so if you're planning on rolling for a while, it's best to take care of your fingers. This is where taping comes in. You might see some guys who only tape a finger or two before training, but once in a while you'll catch a guy who's got every digit wrapped up. Normally, this is to protect the fingers from injury. Taping, as mentioned above, can provide heavy restriction for injured joints, but can also, depending on how you tape, give mild support to aid in injury prevention.

GRIP

Although less merit has been given to taping for improved grip strength, some athletes believe taping their hands and fingers aids in their gripping abilities. No scientific evidence has proven an improvement in grip strength via taping, however tape does provide friction, which can help with your grip. This may be useful, especially in no gi training when friction is limited. However, taping for improved grip ultimately comes down to personal feel and preference.

❖ Tape and Roll is a tape brand made specifically for finger taping.

❖ Tape and Roll offers tape in 1/2 and 1/4 inch widths.



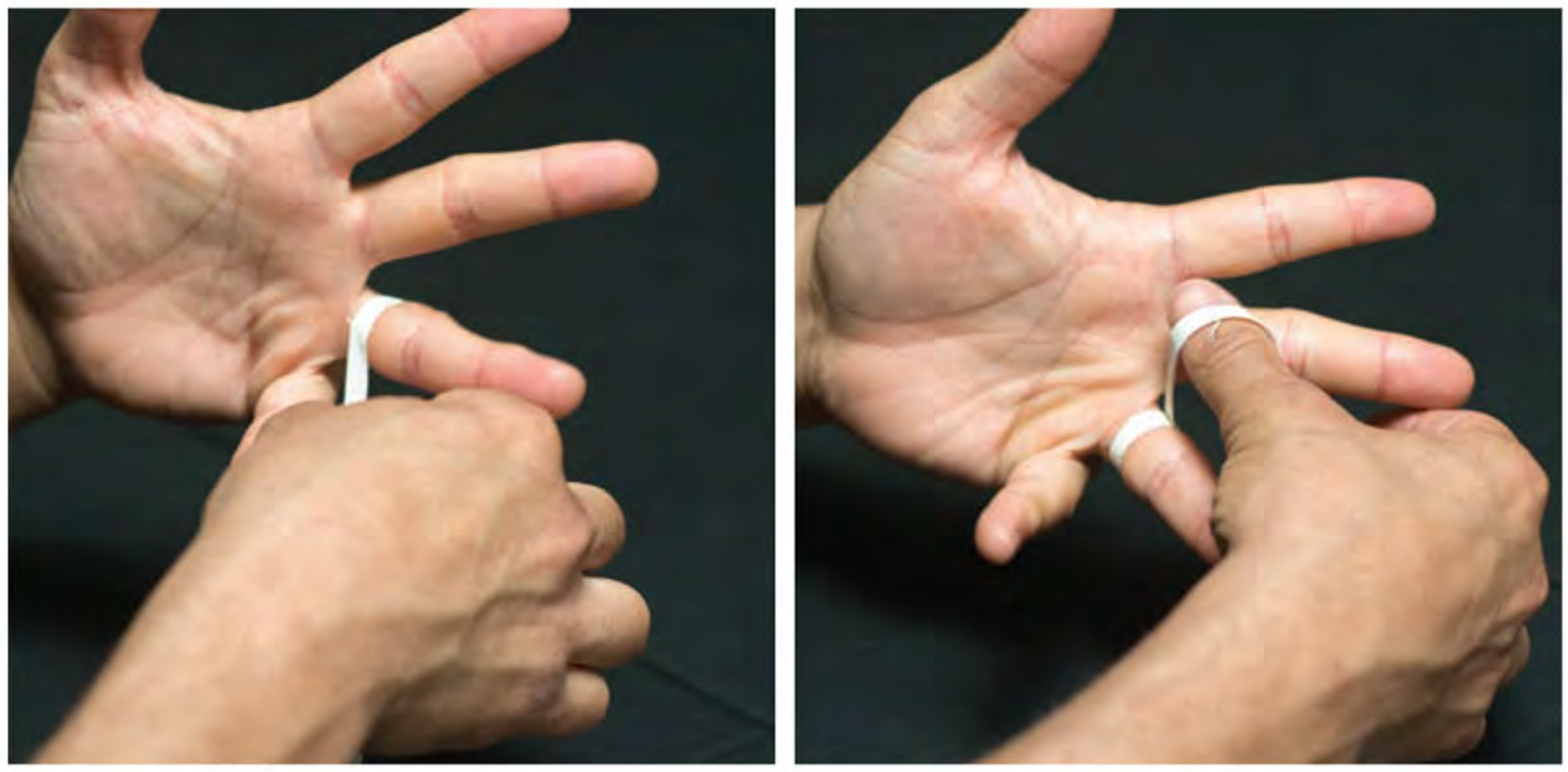
❖ You can also use a larger width tape and tear off the width you need

HOW TO TAPE

X-TAPING

For: Minor sprains, achy fingers, injury prevention, added grip

X-taping is a commonly used method that helps with a variety of issues. This method involves creating an "X" over the injured joint to help support and brace the area. You can create the "X" on the front, back, or sides of the joint in order to restrict the range of motion to a specific direction. You can also create multiple "X's" to the front and back or both sides of a joint for extra reinforcement.



Start by creating an anchor below the affected joint by circling the tape 2 or 3 times around your finger.

Next, bring the tape up, crossing over the affected joint and create an anchor on top by circling around again 2 or 3 times above the joint.

Next, bring the tape down, crossing again over the joint and creating the "X" over the other piece of tape.

Wrap around the anchor again and repeat the sequence one or two more times, depending on how much support you want.

For injured fingers, repeat this on any affected joints. You can do X-taping on either the main, larger joint or the smaller one near the tip of the finger.

FOR INJURY PREVENTION AND IMPROVED GRIP, REPEAT THIS ON ALL OF YOUR FINGERS.

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BUDDY TAPING

For: Sprains, Injuries

Buddy taping is another style that is used to restrict the movement of a specific finger that is injured. This is commonly used with sprains and/or after a severe injury, like a fracture. Buddy taping specifically limits lateral finger movement, however it can be combined with X-taping to provide support and movement restriction based on your needs. For example, if it's painful to move a finger side to side, as well as to bend it forward, you could first X-tape the injured finger with the X on the back side of the joint, then buddy tape the injured finger to the finger next to it.

To buddy tape, start by creating an anchor on the injured finger. The anchor is used to secure the tape so it doesn't slip off of your skin so easily.

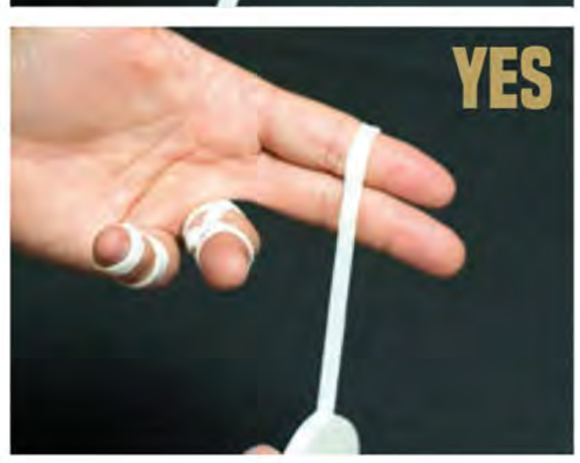
Tape one time around, above and below the injured joint. Decide which fingers you will buddy tape to, and then, starting from the anchor, tape around both fingers 2 or 3 times.

Do this above and below the joint.

If you are X-taping first, there is no need for anchors, just tape the two fingers together, above and below the joint, over the previous tape job.

DON'T LEAVE A PIGGY IN THE COLD

Piggies are usually toes but so what? When buddy taping, it's important to think like Spock. When either your middle or ring finger needs taping whatever you do, don't tape them together. Doing this will leave your pinky and index finger stranded and more susceptible to injury. If the ringer finger needs to be buddied up tape it to your pinky, if the middle finger needs the attention, then buddy up to your index finger.



Important Tips:

- **Don't tape too tightly** as to cut off circulation. If your finger turns dark red, purple, blue, or black, quickly undo the tape and start over.
- **Don't tape too loosely** as to not provide enough support. Taping regularly will develop your sense of feel and lead to a good tape job.
- **Be generous with your tape,** but don't overdo it. Not enough tape will fall off quickly, but too much tape with be bulky and catch on gis and your opponent.
- **These are guidelines,** however, every injury is different. Experiment with different styles or combinations of taping to see what works best for you. If in doubt, contact a doctor or physical therapist.

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20 YEARS
1996 - 2015

US OPEN

BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU TOURNAMENT

WORDS & PHOTOS: **MIKE VELEZ**

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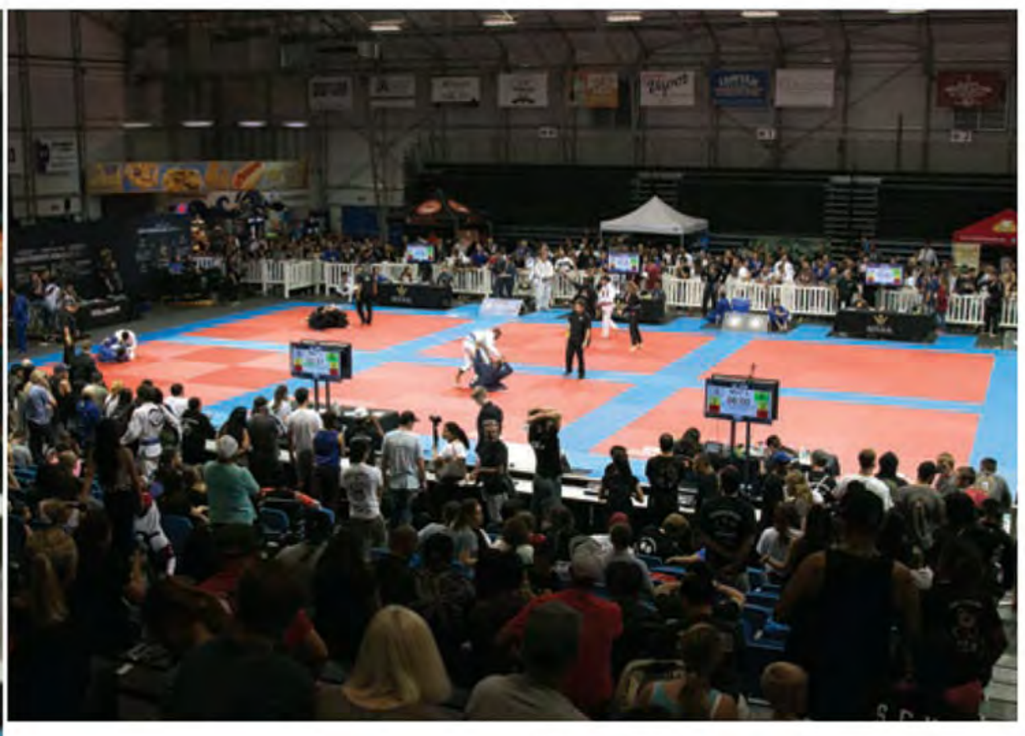
TWENTY YEARS IS A BIG DEAL. THESE DAYS, IT SEEMS MOST MARRIAGES DON'T MAKE IT TO TWENTY YEARS, SO MAYBE THAT'S WHY THE MODERN 20TH ANNIVERSARY GIFT IS PLATINUM. Few jiu-jitsu tournaments can boast that they've made it to their platinum anniversary mark. In fact, there's only one north of the equator, and that's the US Open. The 2015 US Open was the 20th running of the event. This year's event was once again held at the Kaiser Permanente Arena in Santa Cruz, California.



❖ Yuri Simoes is looking for the finish.

❖ The level of talent on display at the US Open was extremely high caliber.

THE BIGGEST YET

This year's US Open featured 1,525 total competitors, 45 black belts and 135 women. That's a far cry from its first year, which drew only 120 entries and three black belts. Still impressive, considering how new jiu-jitsu was to the States back in '96. Like last year's event, this year's was also live broadcasted online, complete with match commentary. The US Open is part of the BJJ Tour, which so far this year has made stops in California, Florida, Texas, Nevada and Connecticut. Along with the prestige that comes along with the thrill of victory, there was $8,000 up for grabs with prizes going to the Black Belt Pro Weight and Open Divisions, Kids Team School, along with Adult Team School.

20 YEARS
1996 - 2015
US OPEN
BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU TOURNAMENT

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COMPETITION

The US Open's schedule was split over Saturday and Sunday; Kids, blues and browns on Saturday; Black, purple, and white belts. Samir Chantre and Osvaldo Moizinho closed out the Featherweight division. The former teammates had plan to square off however Osvaldo felt some knee pain in a previous match and elected not to do battle in the final. In Middleweight Rafael Formiga Barbosa defeated local favorite Nathan Mendelsohn by points. In Heavyweight Ken Primola and Manny Diaz squared off in the final with Manny getting a win via armlock. Yuri Simoes would end up defeating Eliot Kelly by armbar in the Unlimited Final.

The US Open, along with BJJ Tour events are run almost flawlessly with attention paid to every detail. The 20th US Open didn't disappoint. It's definitely one you'll want to attend next year, along with any of the BJJ Tour events being run across the country. For more information check out **bjjtour.com.**

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MASTERING THE CRUCIFIX

WITH ALBERTO CRANE

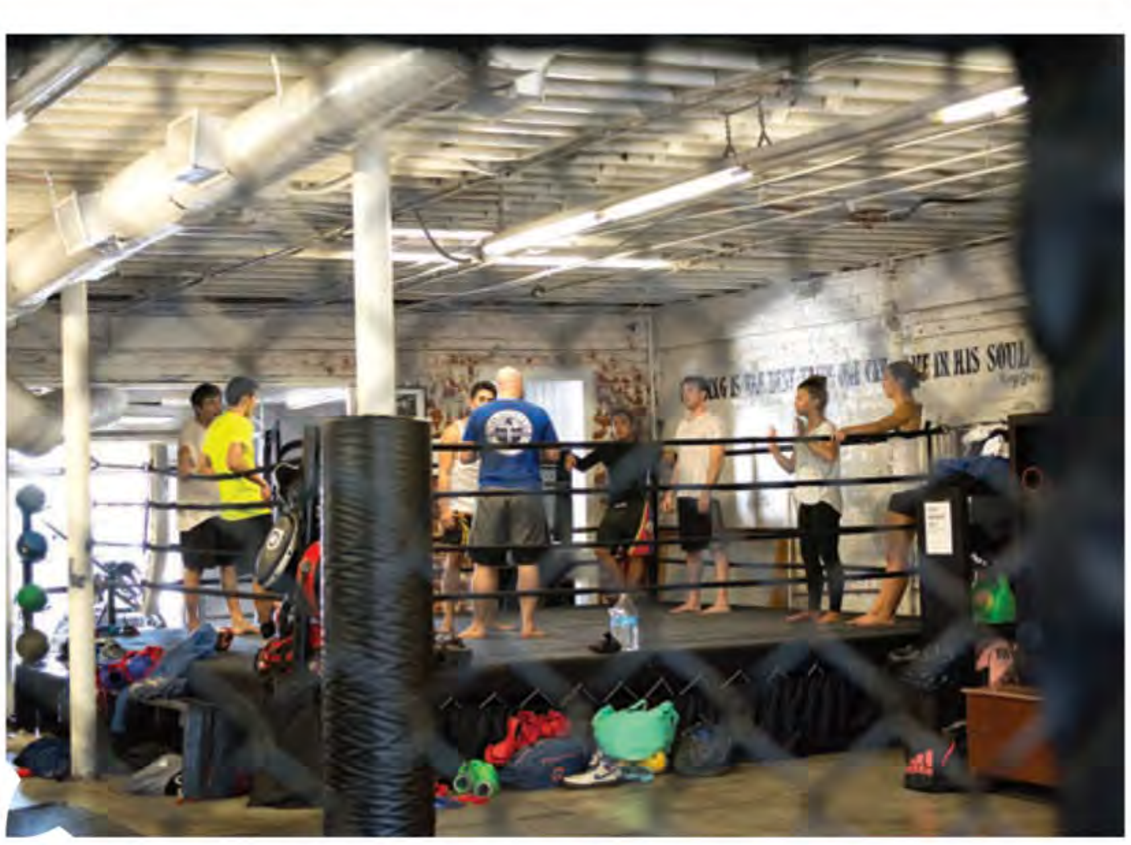
WORDS AND PHOTOS: **PATRICK FLORES**

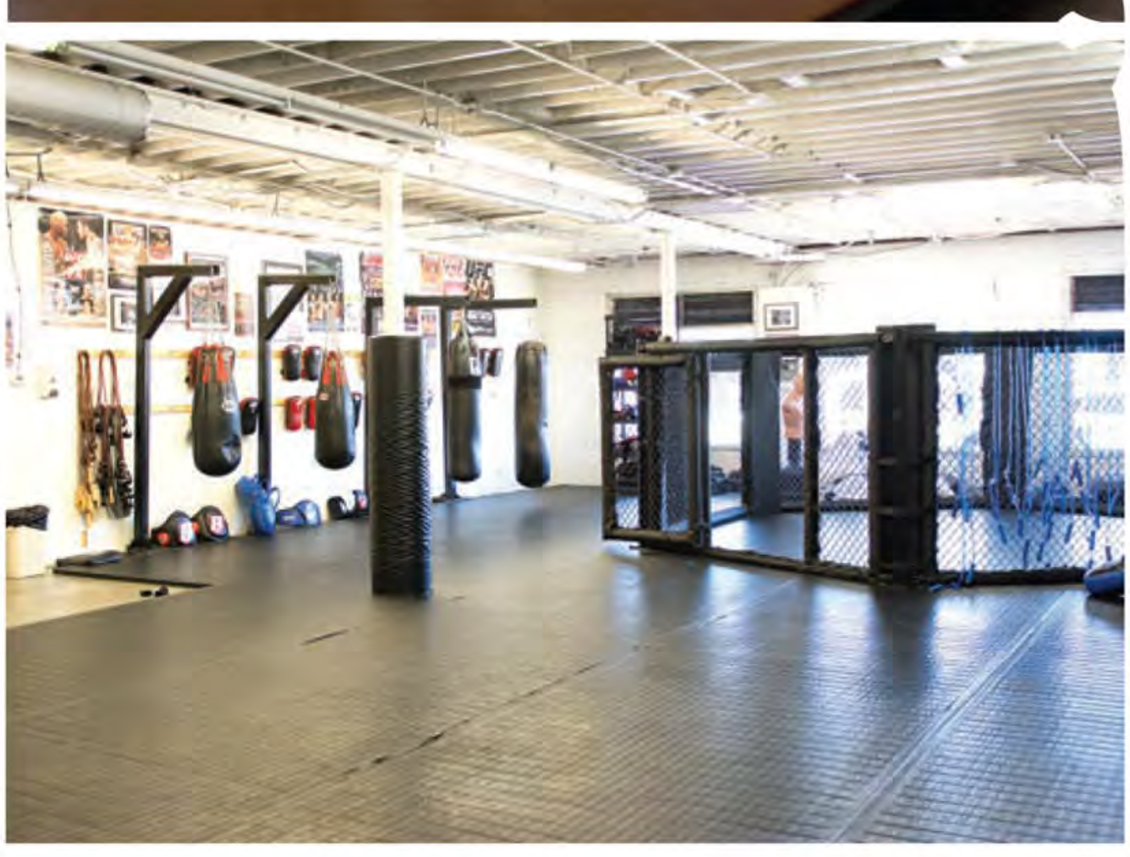
GROWING UP IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, YOU NATURALLY BECOME FAMILIAR WITH CERTAIN LOCAL SPOTS AND WHAT THEY'RE KNOWN FOR. LONG BEACH, FOR EXAMPLE, IS THE RESTING PLACE OF THE ICONIC QUEEN MARY, WHICH IS NOW A FLOATING HOTEL. Anaheim, the home to Mickey Mouse, where for about $200 you can get a single ticket to the "happiest place on earth". Drive north, $200 can also buy you and your significant other a nice dinner at Perch which overlooks Downtown LA with enough cash left ver for drinks and an Uber ride home. I always linked Burbank with NBC Studios and celebrities like Jay Leno, who from time to time can be seen driving around town in one of his many fine automobiles. In the same city, just down the street from the birthplace of SpongeBob SquarePants, is Legacy Jiu-Jitsu, home to another successful California resident and jiu-jitsu entrepreneur Alberto Crane.

Alberto made his living as a fighter. Now, at 39 years old, his focus is more on growing his already successful business and on his students. The former King of the Cage champ and UFC vet, trained jiu-jitsu under Vinicius Magalhães, known to many in jiu-jitsu simply as "Draculino."

Walking into Crane's academy, Legacy Jiu-jitsu, you will be a bit taken aback by the size of the place, and thinnk to yourself, "Wow, it looks smaller from the outside." The hangar like ceilings and large windows looking out to the usually busy streets provide a spacious feel. The lobby comes equipped with comfortable furniture and showcases tokens of Alberto's past triumphs. Jiu-jitsu is quite literally the center of this place with two large rooms adjacent to the main jiu-jitsu room. There is a cross-fit area where you can train your grips with some kettle bell workouts with Joey Alvarado. On the opposite end, there is a large area to train some MMA and Muay Thai if striking is more your vice. Regardless of how you decide to train, you can always go to the Acai Jungle Cafe just next door for some healthy post training fuel. I would recommend the matcha green tea shake.

The once Gracie Barra location turned Legacy Jiu-jitsu has come into its own. Although remnants of the large franchise remain, it only does so predominantly in spirit. Alberto has developed this academy and its programs with his own unique touch with techniques such as the fift -zero guard. Today, however, he showed us another technique he's proficient at: the Crucifix.





INTRODUCTION TO THE CRUCIFIX

I'VE BEEN PUT IN A CRUCIFIX ON MULTIPLE OCCASIONS IN MY JIU-JITSU CAREER. WITH YOUR ARMS TRAPPED BY YOUR OPPONENT AND YOUR LEGS TOO DISTANT TO MOUNT ANY SORT OF RECOVERY, YOU FEEL LIKE A SEAL TRAPPED IN THE JAWS OF A GREAT WHITE SHARK. The technique translates very well into MMA, rewarding masterful application with the ability to rain down punches and elbows with devastating results.

CRUCIFIX FROM STANDING

Smart opponents will shoot for a single leg by attacking the front leg. On the off chance that they attack the back leg or attempt a fireman's carry, the crucifix is a great way to punish your opponent for either making such an elementary mistake or for the audacity that they would dare try a fireman's carry on you.

STEP 1

As your opponents shoots in for your back leg, quickly drop your weight by pivoting your hips as you hook their reaching arm with your leg.

PLAY VIDEO

STEP 2

Ideally done simultaneously with Step 1, clasp your hands together using a seatbelt grip. You can either use an S-grip, or grab your own arm.

STEP 3

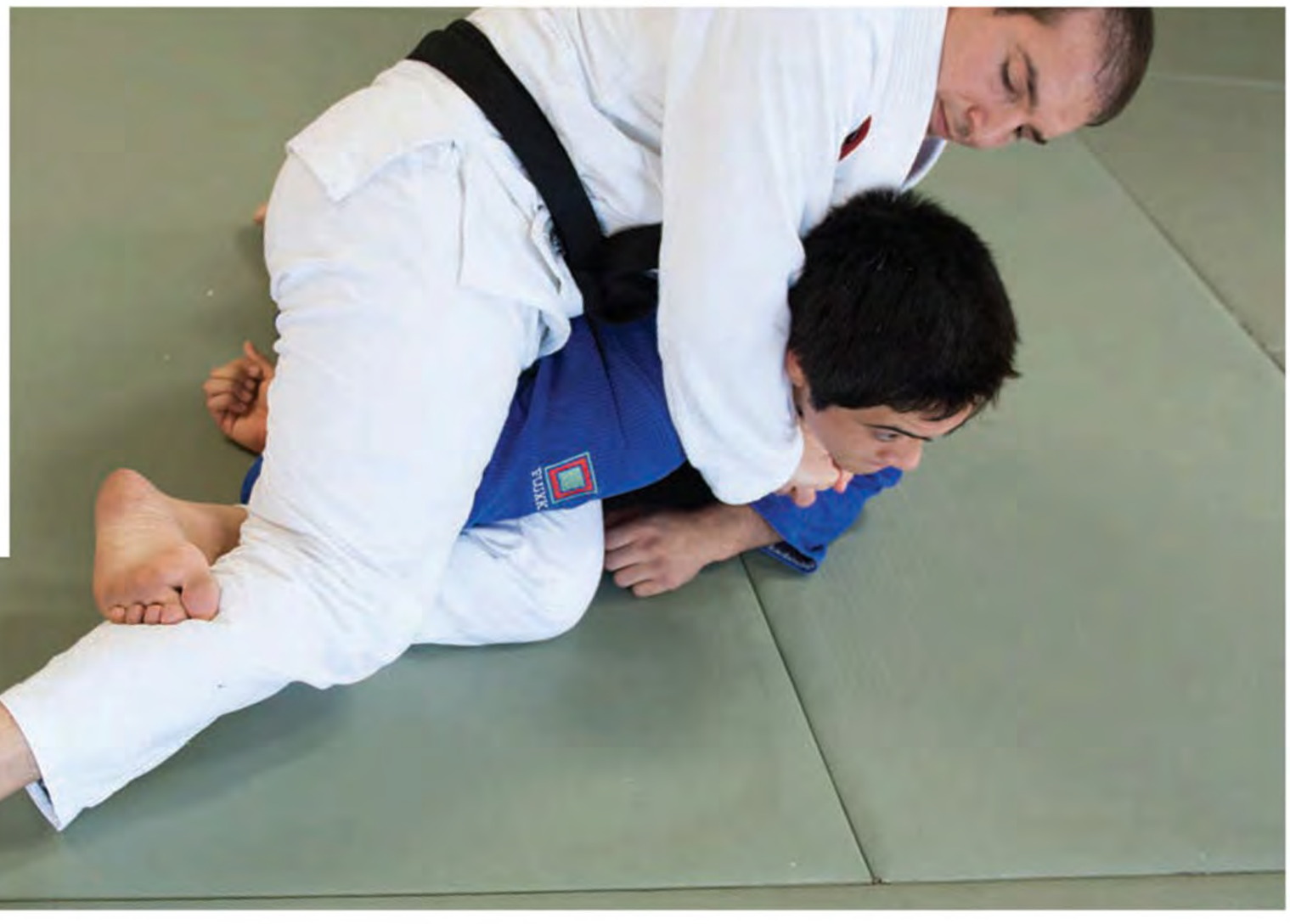
Now with the same leg you have trapped their shooting arm with, extend it back and up for the submission.

TIP:

This is a quick technique that should be applied as such. Don't wait around once you get the seatbelt. Surprise your opponent and make them pay.

ALLIGATOR ROLL

Now let us imagine your opponents didn't fall for that. They wisely identified the crucifix and avoided it by a turn of their elbow so their arm wraps around your base leg, similar to the way you would move the arm for an omoplata.



STEP 1

Begin by trapping your opponent's arm by applying a triangle around it.

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STEP 2

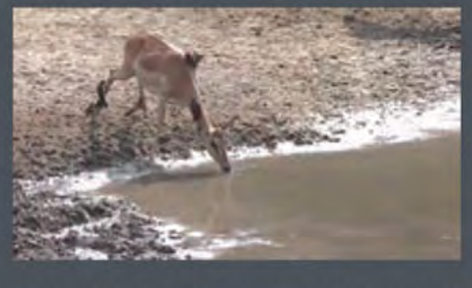
Now roll over their head, driving your shoulder into the back of their neck while maintaining both the triangle and the seatbelt grip.

STEP 3

Your opponent will try to defend even the idea of a choke. Luckily, you have the advantage of having two arms at your disposal when they only have one. Push down the defending hand, as you would in a typical back take scenario. From here you should be able to apply a simple collar choke to finish your opponent.

SIDE NOTE

Ever watch a nature documentaries where the antelope gets too close to a crocodile infested watering hole? They grab their prey, drag them into the water, and use a death roll to rip off the limbs of their victims. This isn't quite as grotesque but you get the point.



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USING THE HALF NELSON

The "half nelson" is common terminology in the wrestling world that has carried its way into jiujitsu. It's similar to a seatbelt grip but avoids wrapping your arms around the chest. It instead favors a downward pressure from your forearm onto the back of your opponent's neck. The half nelson is a great way to prevent your opponent from pulling guard to recover from the Crucifix position

STEP 1

From this position, drive your hooking arm to the back of your opponent's neck.

STEP 2

At this point, your opponent won't be too comfortable. Make them feel even worse by taking your opposite hand and driving it between your hooking arm and your opponent's arm. Wedge through, leaving them exposed for yet another attack.

STEP 3

From here, you can wrap your arm over your opponent's arm, leaving them exposed and uncomfortable. They have no way to defend themselves with nothing but a simple chin tuck. With all the knowledge you've gained reading Jiu-Jitsu Magazine, we're confident you'll be able to make quick work of them at this point.

KEY POINTS

Here's a tip: Grab their pants to prevent any attempt to roll out of the position.

BONUS

EXTRA FINISH - BECAUSE REDUNDANCY IS KEY

Sometimes a collar choke wont work because the gi or collar may be out of place. As a backup plan, know you can attack the arm with little chance of your opponent defending or rolling out.

CRUCIFIX FROM THE BACK

The back is a very dominant position in jiu-jitsu. Many people have gotten very good at defending the back position, not allowing you to sink in a choke of any kind. The crucifix is a g eat way to break down their defenses and reward yourself for reaching the dominant position.

STEP 1

Go over their shoulder with your foot and push that foot on the ground, effectively trapping one of your opponent's arms.

STEP 2

Slide your opposite foot to the same side as the trapped arm by going under your opponent's body. They will be bridging and squirming around, so moving your leg into position should be met with little resistance.

STEP 3

Once again, use a triangle lock around your opponent's arm.

STEP 4

Work to move your opponent's defending hand away by pushing it down so you can go for a choke.

KEY POINTS

You can switch the foot that traps your opponent's arm for a different way to control.

CRUCIFIX COUNTER IN THE DEEP HALF

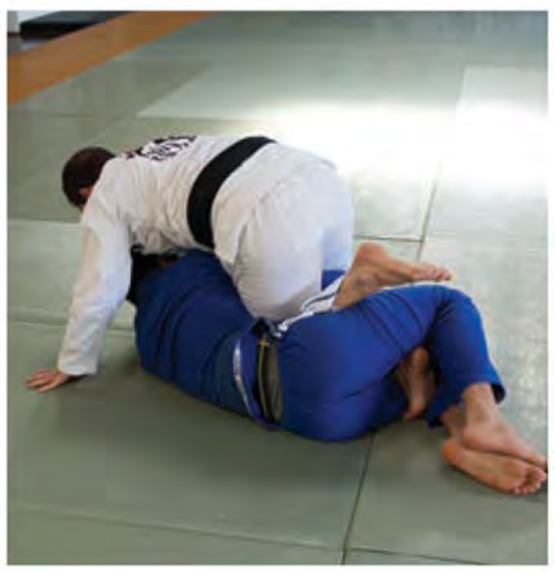
The deep half guard is a popular position used by many gi and no gi practitioners. It's likely that you'll get caught in a deep half position at least once every time you train. Applying the Crucifix from this position is a slick alternative to frantically trying to pull your foot out.

STEP 1

Push yourself back to become heavy. Get your weight over your opponent, making it difficult for them to breathe. Drop your trapped leg knee down to the ground.

STEP 2

Slide your free knee down behind your opponent's tricep and elbow. Force it through, making your opponent uncomfortable.



Alberto managed to get Mike in the Crucifix quite a few times.

STEP 3

Many times, your opponent will feel the armbar in this position and will want to tap. Other times, they will come up on their knees, putting themselves in a crucifix position. This presents you with a great opportunity to capitalize on what you've learned thus far.

STEP 4

You can once again triangle your legs around your opponent's arm. At this point you have the option of attempting an armbar submission.

STEP 5

Add the alligator roll if needed and finish your opponent with a quick collar choke.
Stay tight and don't allow your foe to create any space while you make this transition.

DEFENDING THE CRUCIFIX

ONLINE VIDEO PLAY VIDEO

Being able to perform a proper Crucifix is the first step to understanding how to defend it. Identifying this attack will be key to learning how to avoid being put in the position all together- effectively sidestepping the problem. On the road to mastering how to avoid the Crucifix, you'll likely still find yourself wrapped up in one. Here are a couple ways to defend and escape its clutches.

FACING DOWN

Use this escape/counter when your opponent has their weight on you and you are facing down.

STEP 1

Push into them in an upward motion to create space, almost as if trying to pull guard.

STEP 2

Grab their legs and pull them towards you while stepping over both legs. If you wait too long, your opponent may try to kick their leg back, breaking the grip you have on them.

STEP 3

Quickly begin to lean back and roll your opponent onto their back.

STEP 4

Make sure to defend your neck and work to get your arm out. Turn into your opponent to recover in a side control position.

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FACING UP

Either after the alligator roll or after a back take Crucifix, you'll find yourself staring at the ceiling thinking what went wrong. Instead of worrying about the oncoming submission, try this escape:

STEP 1

Defend your neck and begin to move your body down. Bend your arm in to prevent being caught in an armbar.

STEP 2

Move your body down to get your back and head on the mat

STEP 3

Perform a backwards somersault and end up in the side control position. Use your opponent's head or body to help pull you up if needed. Don't forget to pull your trapped arm out or your opponent may attempt another submission.

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Getting Out of "Park" When Performance Matters

WORDS: **DR. JEFFREY NISHII**

WE'VE ALL BEEN THERE BEFORE. IN THE MIDDLE OF A SPARRING SESSION OR MATCH, GIVING EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT, YOU GO FOR A TECHNIQUE [SAY A SWEEP OR SUBMISSION] AND NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY, YOUR OPPONENT SMOTHERS YOU. You're expending loads of energy and frustration begins to set in. Much to your dismay, your position worsens or you get tapped. Following the match, your coach or teammate asks you why you didn't use a different technique. Maybe they even yelled out clear instructions to do so during the match. You either didn't feel confident going for the other move, forgot the technique altogether, or were totally unaware of them yelling at you.

This is a familiar experience for people of all belt levels and it can happen in life off the mat as well. In high stress situations, we can become hyper focused on making that one move work, while everything else we've ever learned gets thrown out the door. Sometimes we switch to autopilot and do what comes most naturally to us - just reacting to situations with no presence of mind. When under stress, people tend to fall back on behavioral responses that are the most familiar to them and oftentimes, these responses only make matters worse.

Why does this happen in jiu jitsu? Why do people freeze under stress, experience temporary amnesia, and fail to apply what they have learned in the past? To answer this question, we must examine the three foundations of sport performance as they apply to jiu jitsu. The first piece of the puzzle is the mind.

THE MIND

Our minds are constantly in action - providing commentary, forming opinions, appraising situations, assessing risks, and most of the time we are not even aware of it. For our purposes, the mind refers to the thoughts, emotions, and beliefs that are at play during competitive situations. Here are some examples of each of these:

YOUR THOUGHTS

- "There's a lot of people in my bracket."
- "Damn his belt is pretty worn out."
- "I'm still recovering from an injury and I'm not 100%."

YOUR EMOTIONS

- Nervous
- Excited
- Stressed

YOUR BELIEFS

- "If I lose, I will be a disappointment to the people who came to support me"
- "Winning is success, losing is failure."
- "I'm inferior to others."

The thoughts, emotions, and beliefs above are highly common among new and even experienced competitors. If we don't have a proper command of our mental state, we could be doomed for failure before the match even starts. Our thoughts become our reality so it is of paramount importance that we take the time to examine and alter them if necessary. Your mindset should be an asset, not a liability.

THE BODY

The second part of our performance equation is our body's physiology. When we feel calm and confident, our muscles are relaxed, breathing is regular, and we experience greater mental clarity. When we experience stress or anxiety, our sympathetic nervous system activates, causing a host of physiological responses which includes increased heart rate, sweat gland activation, pupil dilation, muscle constriction, etc... We tend to feel tense, on edge, and irritable. It's our body's natural way of preparing us for potentially life threatening situations. Of course, you're not going to die, but for the unprepared competitor, the anatomy does not distinguish this fact.

TECHNICAL FLUENCY

The final piece to our performance equation involves our level of technical fluency. This is referring to the degree with which one can apply various techniques effectively and without cumbersome mental deliberation. The word "fluency" is derived from the the Latin word for "flow". The more you practice a certain technique or movement, the more it will flow out of you in practice, and the less you will have to stop, think, and plan your actions. How do people like Galvao and the Mendes Bros breakdance on people's backs? A big part of the answer is repetition, repetition, and more repetition.

So, now that we have an understanding of these three fundamental components of sport performance, we can map out our training and competition preparation plan. Having control of our mental space, acquiring tools to overcome psychological and physiological stress, and developing an ever improving technical fluency should be your main priorities. What follows are some suggestions on how to improve your performance by training both your mind and body.

MASTER YOUR MIND

Tip # 1: Become Aware

The first step to cleaning out your mental space is taking stock of what's in there. What thoughts arise while sparring or in competition? What runs through your mind before a match? Make an effort to get to know your thought patterns by writing them down and examining them.

Tip # 2: Turn a Negative Into a Positive.

The act of modifying a negative thought into a positive one is called "reframing". In competition, there is no room for self-defeating thoughts. Even if your open guard sucks, modify your thoughts to say that your open guard is getting better.

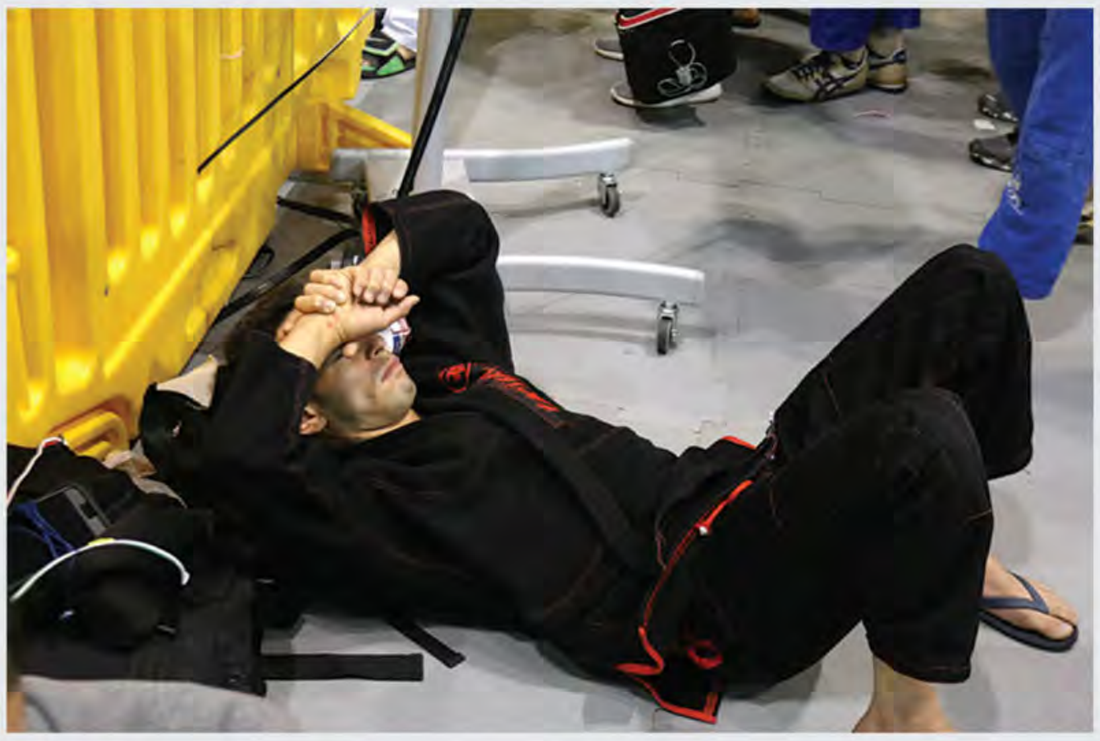
Tip # 3: Don't Fight It

Understand that fear and anxiety are normal and healthy. If a gazelle didn't fear for its life, it wouldn't have the urgency to run as fast as possible to escape a hungry lion. Use the energy and activation created by fear and anxiety to your benefit.

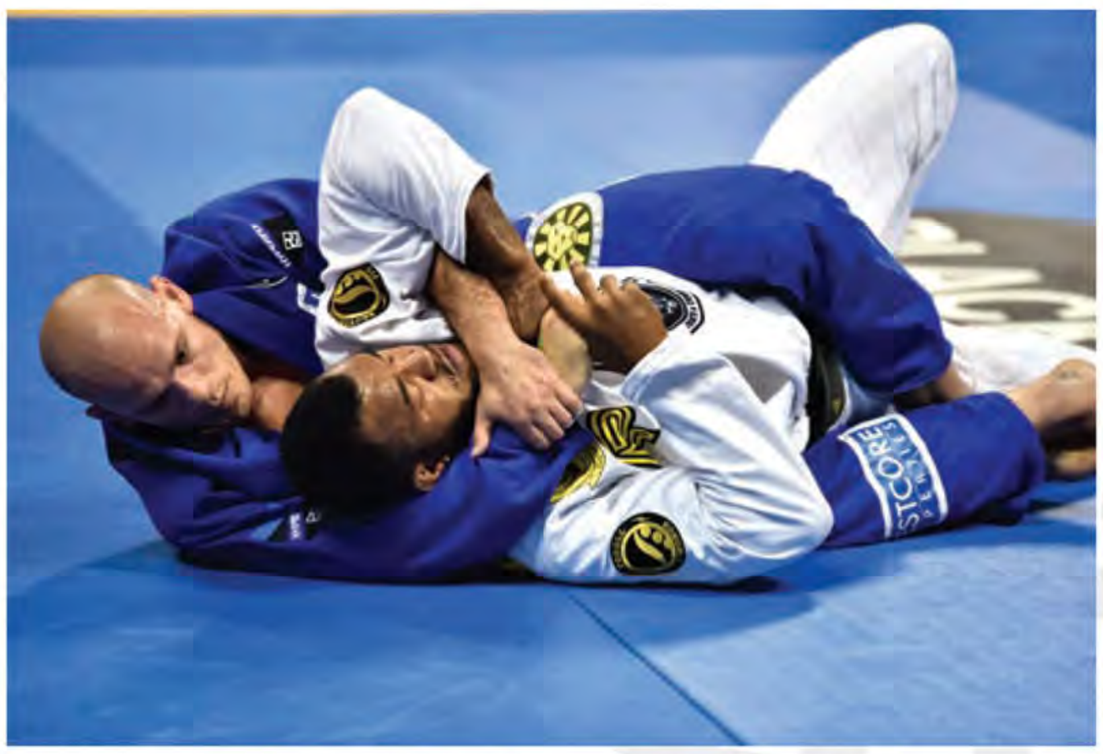
MASTER YOUR BODY

Tip # 1: Breathe In, Breathe Out We all know (or should know by now) that breathing is super important. Breathing may be the single most important skill to develop in life because it can help us in just about any situation. Before competing or sparring, your breathing can be used to energize or calm you down (or both) depending on what your body needs in that moment. Too amped? Take deep, slow, relaxing breaths. Too relaxed, take deep, forceful power breaths to invigorate your mind and body. During a match, breathing can be used to help you refocus your attention, recover from exhaustion, or enhance your movement. Breathing after a match is important too. Taking deep recovery breaths after a match can help clear out lactic acid and reset our nervous system, speed up recovery, and help us prepare for the next match.

Tip # 2: Visit a Special Place If you find yourself overwhelmed prior to fighting, think of a place you once visited that made you feel totally relaxed and at home. Think about the scenery, the sounds, the smells, and the people that were there. Take deep, calming breaths as you visualize and re-experience this place in your mind. When done properly for 3-5 minutes, you should feel recentered, refocused, and more relaxed.



Tip # 3: Smile and Be Thankful Sometimes, I see competitors who look like they're about to walk the plank or murder someone. You're competing in the art you love. Loosen up! It's okay to have fun and smile while kicking some butt.



MIND GAMES

MAKE IT FLOW

Tip # 1: Technical Repetition When it comes to technical fluency, there is no substitute for the countless hours of drilling, practicing, and refining of techniques for different situations. The more you rehearse what to do in a given situation, the more adept and automatic you will become in your application of technique. Know the ins and outs of your go to positions. Know your weaknesses and acquire more skill and knowledge to overcome them. The greats don't have to think about how to kill a reverse De la Riva hook or leg lasso; they just do it, as they've practiced thousands of times before in the gym.

Tip # 2: Mental Rehearsal/ Visualization Perhaps the most powerful tool you have is your imagination. Victory and success first comes from a thought created by our imaginative minds. Visualizing yourself executing a technique, overcoming challenges, and succeeding will create a breakthrough in your performance results. Develop a visualization routine and practice it for thirty days prior to a competition and see just what happens.

Now that you have a few ideas on how to up your performance, the next step is to take action. Get a journal or a planner and jot down just 2 or 3 tips to focus on and practice over the next couple weeks. And just like techniques in jiu-jitsu, the mental techniques above require consistent practice over time. The more and more you practice them, the more second nature they will become.

GEAR LAB

FLOW KIMONOS

HEMP SERIES GI

WWW.FLOWKIMONOS.COM

YES, THIS GI IS 100% HEMP. HEMP IS GENERALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE CANNABIS PLANT, WHICH IS ALSO KNOWN AS MARIJUANA. Hemp is actually a sibling plant to marijuana and contains no psychoactive properties. This is due to the fact it contains very miniscule amounts of THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. It is a surprise to most people that the plant possesses many amazing properties. It's very strong and durable, capable of even building automobiles. It grows faster than cotton, making it a more effici t crop for farmers to produce. Flow Kimonos has taken this versatile plant and did what any jiu-jitsu practitioner would do- no, not smoke it but make a gi out of it!

Flow advertises this gi as a luxury item that will create envy for all those that lay eyes on it. It's an eco-friendly gi with natural anti-microbial properties. With nine different cuts/sizes you'll be sure to find the one that fits you best.

THE JACKET

It's made from 550 GSM of 100% hemp and uses a basket weave. This material is very breathable, more so than you might think. It's stitched very well with no visible flaws throughout the jacket. The stitching around the arms is great, which provides maximum mobility.

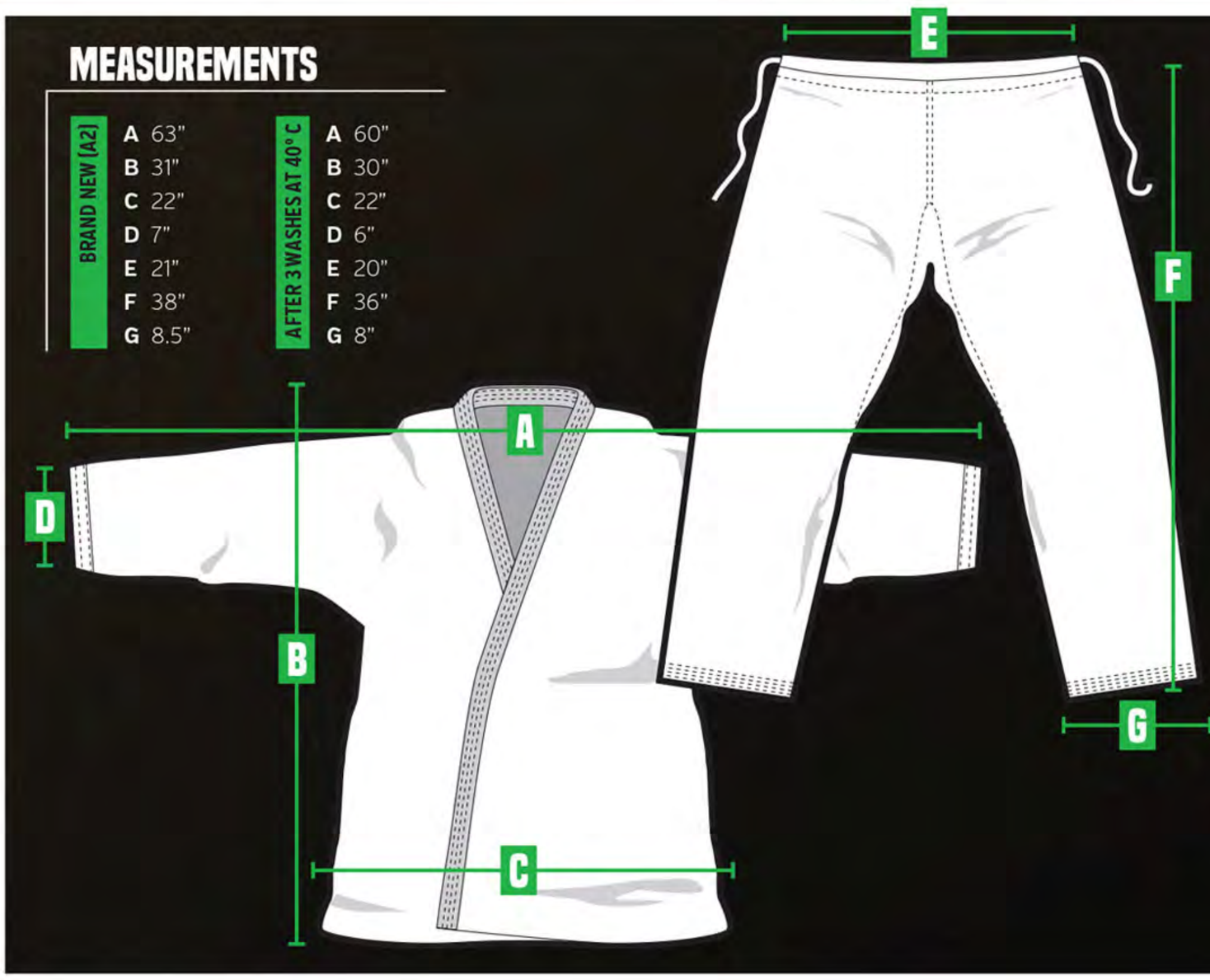
The jacket features little patchwork as most logos visible from the exterior are all embroidered. These embroidered logos can be found on each arm, the front lower lapel, and the upper back. The logos are minimal and don't distract but compliment the gi nicely. The black stitching and interior trim accent the "natural white" color (also available in Black or Navy) of the gi which provides some added flair.

THE PANTS

The pants pair great with the jacket. Like with the jacket, the stitching is done well, which really adds some style and highlights the natural white color. The knees are reinforced with some extra material for added comfort. You'll find some embroidery located on the lower part of the pants around the ankle. Flow has used high-density foam-filled drawcord for the pants. The cord is red but I would have personally liked to see the cord in the same green or black they've been using throughout the gi. It's possible that Flow wanted the drawcord to stand out or for some practical production reason. With the jacket on, however, little attention will be drawn to the drawcord. This cord does work great and I would even be willing to purchase it separately to use with other gis I own... more on that later.

MEASUREMENTS

	BRAND NEW (A2)	AFTER 3 WASHES AT 40° C
A	63"	60"
B	31"	30"
C	22"	22"
D	7"	6"
E	21"	20"
F	38"	36"
G	8.5"	8"



FIT AND FEEL

I'm 5'9" and 170lbs. The sizing chart on Flow's website suggests an A2 and it's right on the money. The sleeve length is exactly where I like it to be and the lapels overlap perfectly without any restriction of motion. The arms and shoulder in particular are cut really well, as I mentioned earlier. The pants fit great, but were a bit baggier than I would prefer. I do personally favor a tighter cut but others may enjoy the fit. The new collar is a bit stiff but after a couple washes, I barely noticed it. If this is the first time you're wearing a hemp gi, or first time wearing hemp in general, the material will feel foreign. It will take some getting used to but will begin to feel more natural as you continue to wear it.

GEAR LAB

ROLLING IN IT

I have to admit, I was pretty surprised at how much I enjoyed rolling in this gi. The gi's texture may give you the initial impression that it would be uncomfortable but it's actually not bad. With a rash guard, you won't notice any difference in the jacket. Without one, it may feel a bit rougher but once you start getting a sweat going, the difference between the hemp gi and cotton is negligible. The pants are quite comfortable. The drawstring on these pants simply steal the show. It seems like such a small detail but it makes a difference. I generally have to retie my pants and adjust my entire gi with every roll. With these pants, I didn't have to retie them once. The cord is soft an squishy, which makes it very comfortable.

HEMP Q&A

How is Hemp Turned into Fabric?

After hemp is harvested and treated, there is a mechanical process called "breaking." This process passes the hemp between fluted rollers to break it apart. A process called "scotching" separates the fiber for production.

Why Would I Want a Gi Made of Hemp?

On the mats, your gi is sometimes the only barrier between you and whatever germs are on there. Hemp doesn't allow bacteria, such as staph and ringworm, to survive. It's also naturally antimicrobial and anti-odor. The material also wicks away moisture from the body and dries relatively quickly.

Why Aren't All Gis Made of Hemp?

There are several long-winded reasons why hemp in general is not used in the production of more clothing. Listening to the Joe Rogan Experience will inform you of all of them. Hemp has a stigma attached with it in the United States and other countries because of its association with marijuana. It's kind of like being the younger sibling of an ex-con. It's difficul to source hemp in the United States and it's more regulated than cotton, so companies are less willing to work with it.

Do I Have to Treat a Hemp Gi Any Differently From a Cotton Gi?

Cold wash and hang dry like you would a cotton gi. It's also a good idea to use an eco friendly detergent. Make sure to check with the gi's manufacturer for exact care instructions. Flow Kimonos has a good blog on how to care for your hemp gi on their website: ***FLOWKIMONOS.COM/BLOGS/NEWS/17497880-HOW-TO-CARE-FOR-YOUR-HEMP-GI***

Are Hemp Gis Legal in Competition?

The official IBJ rules on gi fabric state, "Gis should be tailored using cotton or cotton-like fabric only." Hemp is a cotton substitute so you should be okay. Hemp gis, however, may not always be a typical white color and IBJJF requires your gi to be white, royal blue, or black. Some hemp gis may be a natural or off-white color [like a very light brown/yellow]. Make sure the patchwork and embroidery of the hemp gi you purchase is also within the rules of IBJJF.

VERDICT

HIGHLIGHT & SPECS

- 100% hemp, 4x stronger than cotton
- Natural antimicrobial and anti-odor properties
- Amazing draw cord
- Great cut and fits well

VERDICT

Great cut, great material!

PERFORMANCE	★★★★½
VALUE	★★★½
QUALITY	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★½

CONCLUSION

This is a great gi. The hemp fabric provides some unique qualities such as improved durability and natural resistance to bacteria. I really enjoyed the fit of the jacket. It hugged my body in all the right places but still allowed me to retain my mobility. Not to reiterate myself, but the draw cord on these pants are amazing and really a highlight of the entire gi. The gi however does come at a $200 price tag. It is hemp and one can argue that with the durability of this gi, it will outlast other gis in your armory. If you're willing to pay the premium for this gi, you won't be disappointed. I'm glad to see Flow Kimonos produce the eco friendly hemp gi and look forward to rolling with this gi for years to come.

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MRSA ON AND OFF THE MAT

WORDS: **LEE DAY, MD**

Please note that this is provided as general education and is not intended to treat or cure any condition. Anyone reading should speak directly to their personal health care provider about their specific medical needs.

ON SATURDAYS, MY GYM HAS A NO GI CLASS WITH ROLLING AFTERWARD. BY THE TIME I'M FINISHED, I'M COVERED IN A MIX OF MY OWN AND MY PARTNERS' SWEAT. I always seem to be more aware of how much I need a shower after no gi classes because I don't have the skin protection of the gi. Luckily, I've been able to avoid any fungal or bacterial skin infections in my jiu-jitsu training so far. Among the most worrying of the skin infections is methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA – pronounced "Mursa").

WHAT IS MRSA?

The bacterium Staphylococcus aureus – often called Staph aureus or Staph – is a common cause of boils and various eruptions on the skin. It can also cause pneumonia or even blood-stream infections that may lead to infections of the joints, bones, and the heart-valves, among others. Widespread antibiotic treatment of infections began in the early 1940s after the discovery of penicillin by Alexander Fleming in 1928. At the time, most Staph infections were sensitive to penicillin. By the 1950s, however, many Staph infections had become resistant to penicillin. A new antibiotic related to penicillin, called methicillin, was developed to treat these penicillin-resistant bacteria. By the late 1960s, the first cases of methicillin-resistant Staph aureus were found in the US. The use, and especially misuse, of antibiotics selected for the preservation of Staph strains caused the development of antibiotic resistance. Most of the

initial cases of MRSA occurred in elderly people living in nursing homes or in sick patients in the hospital. That changed in the 90s, when more and more MRSA skin infections were found in healthy people who lived in the community. While there are still plenty of cases of Staph that are sensitive to methicillin – called methicillin-sensitive Staphylococcus aureus (MSSA) – the movement of MRSA into the community represented a threat to public health.

MRSA IN THE COMMUNITY:

Although the hospital-associated variety of MRSA is of great concern, community-associated MRSA is the type that most jiu-jitsu practitioners will face. According to the National Institutes of Health, the exact sources of community-associated MRSA are often difficul to pinpoint. Those most often identified are in crowded settings, places with close skin-to-skin contact, and in sports-related areas where equipment, razors, towels, etc are shared. It's easy to see how a jiu-jitsu gym can be an ideal setting for transmission. The Staph bacterium (both MRSA and MSSA) is estimated to be carried on the skin or in the nose as normal flora in up to 30% of healthy individuals. This colonization of Staph often causes no problems in the host. It can also be carried on clothing – such as a gi – or other surfaces. Infection most commonly occurs when there is a break in the skin that allows entrance of the bacteria.

SYMPTOMS/TREATMENT:

The first signs of a Staph infection can be variable, but it often presents as a single raised, red area on the skin that may itch. At this stage, many people think they have a spider bite or a random pimple. Then, the area swells and becomes more painful and warm. There may also be pus draining from the center of the lesion. Don't wait around and attempt to pop or prick the area with a needle at home; prompt medical attention can help prevent further spread. Treatment varies depending on the presentation, antibiotics, and/or surgical drainage may be needed. Evidence of body-wide infection or lesions that are particularly large will likely require treatment with IV antibiotics in a hospital setting. Fluid or tissue samples are usually taken to help choose the appropriate antibiotic. Speaking of antibiotics, I mentioned earlier that MRSA is resistant to methicillin. That doesn't mean it is resistant to all antibiotics, for there are many antibiotics that work well for MRSA infections.

GENERAL PREVENTION:

As successful as treatment often is, a quick Google search of MRSA infection images will let you know why prevention is preferred. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have made some general guidelines that are fairly easy to follow. The most essential is to wash your hands the correct way. First, wet your hands with water. Use plain soap (no need for the antibacterial variety) and rub your hands together for 15-30 seconds. Rubbing hands together thoroughly is as important as the soap itself. It's important when washing hands to include fingernails, between fingers, and the wrists. Paper towels are preferred for drying hands since they are single-use and can then be used to turn off the faucet. Another option that's common among grapplers are Defense Wipes from Defense Soap. Next, if you have any cuts or scrapes, keep those dry, clean, and covered with a bandage until they have completely healed. Also, avoid touching other people's wounds. Lastly, don't share personal use items such as towels, razors, combs/brushes, uniforms, etc.

NATURAL PRODUCTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR HOME:

There is a lot of interest in natural products for prevention and treatment of skin infections, and – this is actually unusual – there is a decent amount of published information in the medical literature. Essential oils like tea tree, thyme, and lemongrass, among others, have been shown in many in vitro (laboratory) and human studies to inhibit bacterial growth. Popular jiu-jitsu products like Defense Soap use tea tree oil as an active ingredient. A medical-grade product I wasn't previously familiar with, called Manuka honey, has also been shown in lab studies to work well as an antimicrobial product – even against MRSA strains. There are many other products that have similar properties and there is a great need for continued research in light of growing antibiotic resistance. The research on natural products is very promising but to echo the American Association of Family Physicians, there is still insuffici t evidence (in terms of a lack of strong clinical trials) to either fully recommend or dismiss these products for prevention or treatment of skin infections. One of the easiest and established ways to help prevent resistance is to choose appropriate products for home use. It's been suggested that triclosan, the ingredient commonly found in antibacterial products, can contribute to increasing resistance in bacteria and accumulate in aquatic species. Further, antibacterial soaps have not been shown to reduce the amount of bacteria on hands any more than plain soap. The reason plain soap is effective, and doesn't contribute to antimicrobial resistance, is that it doesn't really "kill" microbes; soap and the friction of rubbing hands together dislodges bacteria from the skin, and then the bacteria is washed down the drain.

Dr. Day's Rx for Infection Prevention in Jiu-Jitsu:

While the prevention guidelines above are general, some more jiu-jitsu-specific guidelines are listed below that can help cut down on the risk of contracting or passing skin infections:

01. **Keep Hands and Feet Clean:** Wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer – as outlined previously – before stepping on the mat. I've also seen some academies that have students use sanitizer on their feet as well – definitely not a bad idea. For gym owners, avoid multiple-use cloth hand towels in public restrooms. Also, anytime you step off the mat wear flip-flops/shoes.

02. **Clean Your Gear:** Wear a clean gi, rash guard, shorts, etc... to class, and wash your gear after each use. Gym bags and even (dare I say) belts should be washed often as well. I'd rather replace my belt stripes if they fall off from laundering than pass along unnecessary germs to my teammates.

03. **Good Body Hygiene:** Bathe regularly – you don't want to be the stinky person in class. Also, keep your fingernails and toenails short and clean. Longer nails can easily cut the skin and allow entrance of microbes.

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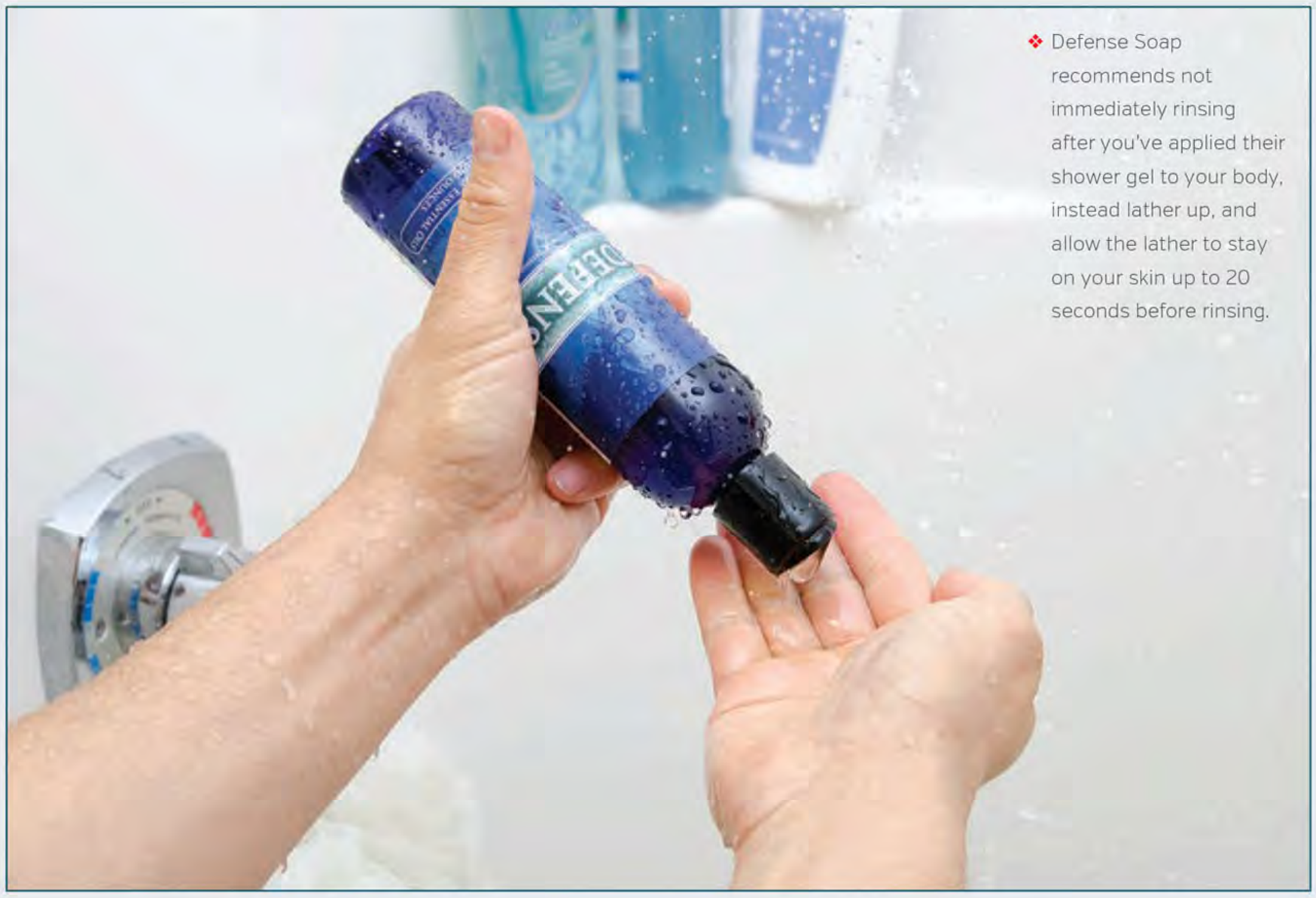
04.

Shower After Class: Shower as soon as possible after every class. Even if you don't roll hard, you have still been in a close-contact environment that increases risk of transmission.



- Defense Soap recommends not immediately rinsing after you've applied their shower gel to your body, instead lather up, and allow the lather to stay on your skin up to 20 seconds before rinsing.

05.

Clean the Mats: Gym owners or students should sweep and then clean mats with something like a bleach-based cleaner at least daily (ideally after each class).

06.

Address Possible Infections: Promptly clean any cuts or scrapes with soap and water. Also, do not train or compete if you have an active or draining skin lesion. Keep any lesions clean, dry, and covered with a bandage until healed.

07.

Adopt a Culture of Clean: If there is someone in class with less-than-stellar hygiene, either speak directly to them or ask your instructor to let the individual know. Instructors should lay the groundwork for good gym-wide hygiene with new white belts, as this leads to the expectation of cleanliness from the start.

WRAP UP:

MRSA and other skin infections are no joke, and they can be common in jiu-jitsu. Thankfully, common sense practices like properly washing hands, having good personal hygiene, cleaning gear after each use, and keeping the gym mats disinfected can tremendously decrease the chances of contracting or transmitting a skin infection. If gym owners adopt a set of gym cleanliness rules for all members, everyone can benefit from the more sanitary training environment. Unfortunately, no matter how clean you are, it's still possible to contract a skin infection. If you suspect you may have a skin infection, don't wait around to seek medical attention.

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GRAPPLERS' NECK

BUILDING STRENGTH IN YOUR NECK

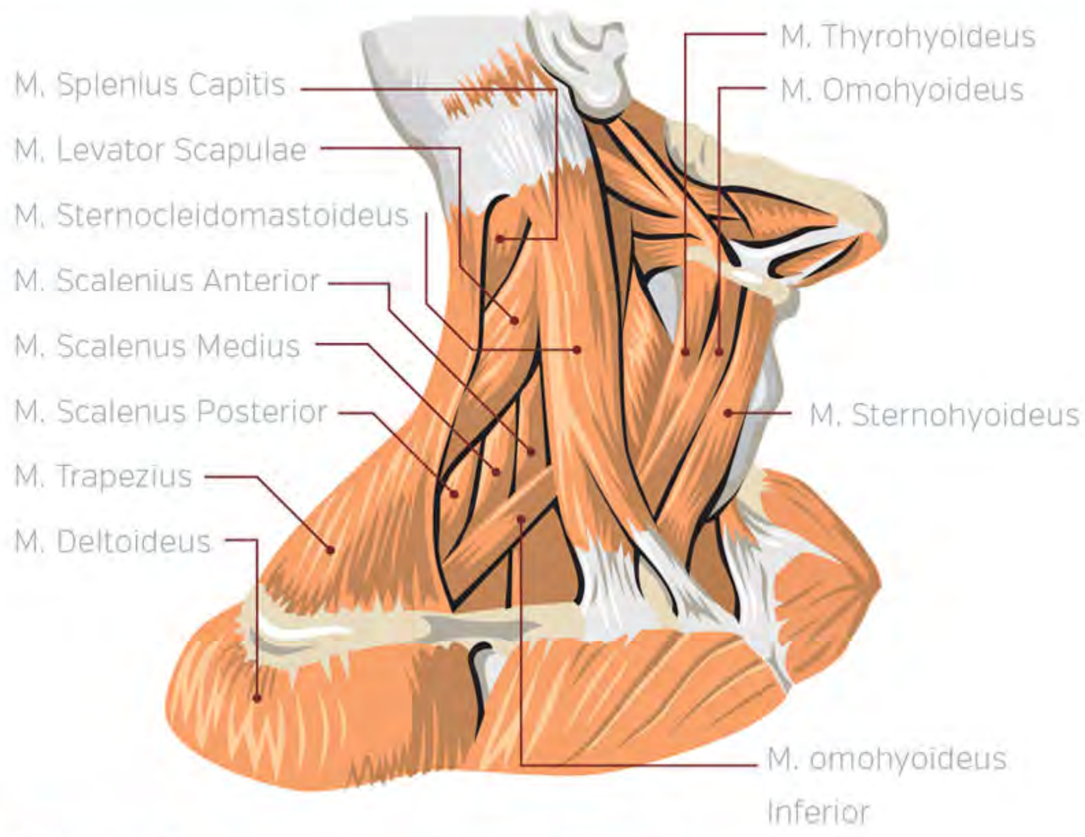
WORDS: **NAVEED SHAN**

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT YET UNDERRATED MUSCLE GROUPS UTILIZED BY GRAPPLERS IS THE MUSCULATURE OF THE NECK. YOU CAN ALWAYS TELL A WELL-SEASONED GRAPPLER TYPICALLY BY THEIR EARS AND THE THICKNESS OF THEIR NECK, THIS IS QUITE APPARENT ON THE LIKES OF ANDRE GALVAO, KRON GRACIE, OR RODOLFO VIERA. Preventing an opponent from snapping your neck down in the clinch, maintaining a good posture in someone's guard, and even using your head to finish a double leg take down all utilize the musculature of the neck. Just as any other muscle in an athlete's body, the neck helps support and move joints, resisting forces and preventing injury. The neck muscles in particular assists in stabilizing the cervical spine and may reduce the risk of injury, which is common in jiu-jitsu.

Anatomy of the Neck

This group of muscles is often neglected by most athletes, disregarded as unimportant. But as Martin Rooney of Training for Warriors once said, "The neck is the pillar of the body, but nobody trains the neck at all these days. The top guys all have extremely strong necks; to compete with the big boys, neck training is essential."

Even off of the mat, strengthening of the musculature around the neck can improve posture. Poor posture is common for those of us with "9 to 5" desk jobs. Sitting at a desk all day increases cervical lordosis or forward protrusion of the neck, causing discomfort and increasing the risk of chronic neck pain. Strengthening the posterior neck muscles helps stabilize the spine and improve posture.



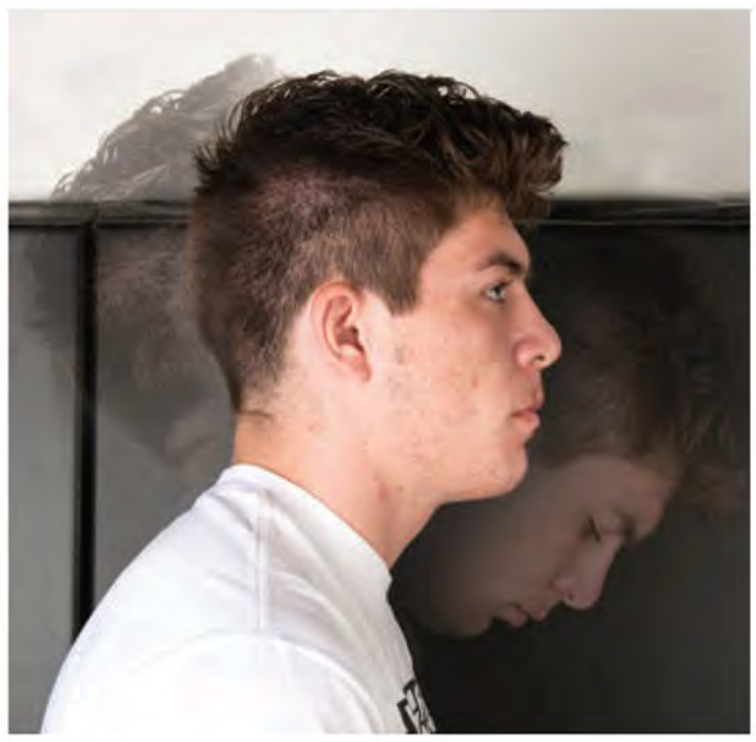
Good

Bad

A FEW NOTES OF ANATOMY AND FUNCTION: THE MUSCLES OF THE CERVICAL SPINE PERFORM SEVERAL MOVEMENTS AND THE RELATED LIGAMENTS LIMIT THESE MOVEMENTS.

Axial Rotation: shaking your neck side to side

Lateral Flexion: touching your ear to your shoulder



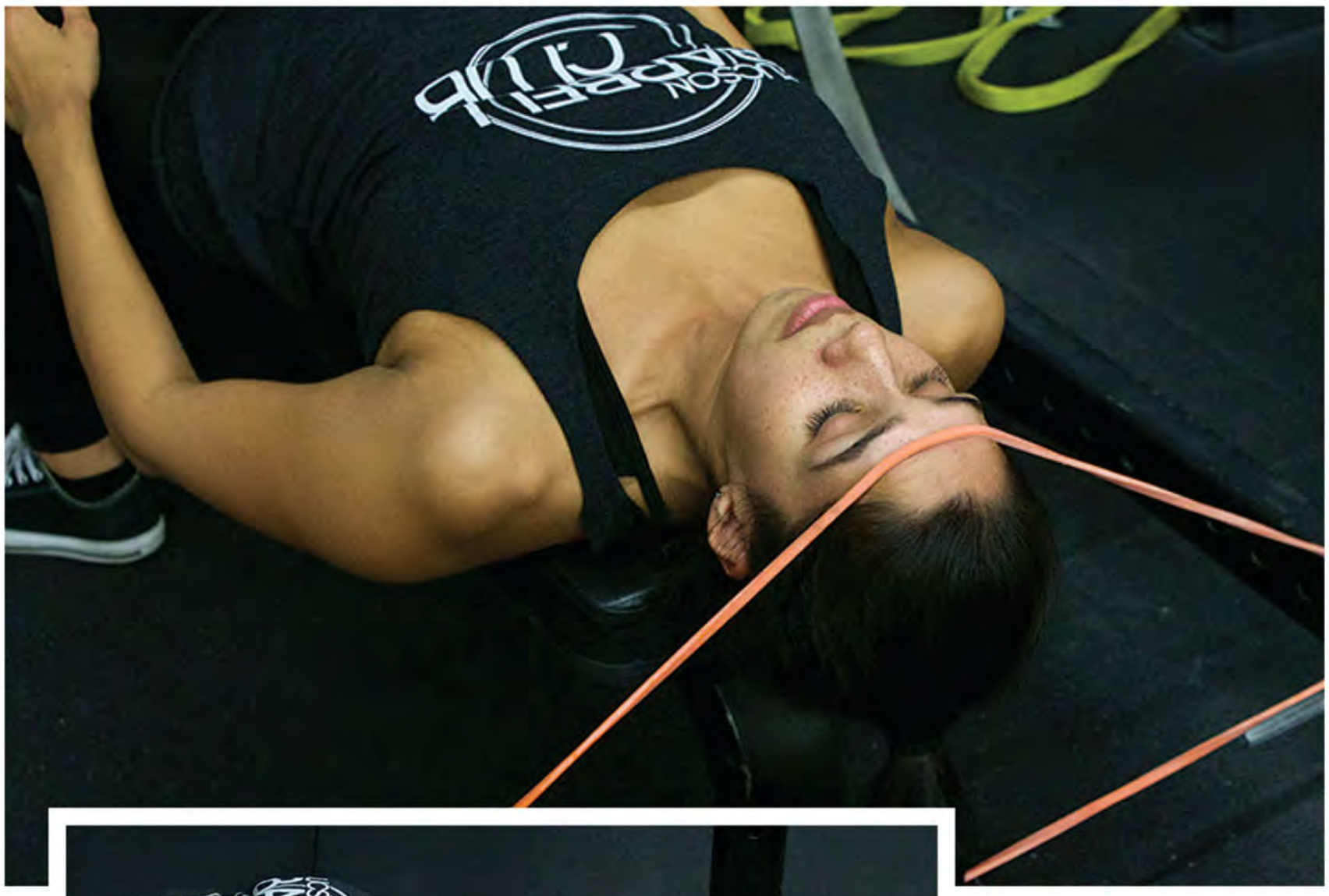
Flexion and Extension: nodding your head up and down

A strong and stable neck should be able to go through a full range of motion in all of the above movements without pain. The majority of exercises listed below are isometric or "anti-rotary" movements. This strengthens the muscle without changing the length of the muscle. This type of exercise is one of the safest and effective ways to train this group of muscles in particular. Below are some of the most effective neck exercises for jiu-jitsu fighters. While they may seem easy at first sight, their efficacy has been proven with countless athletes from MMA fighters to football players and jiu-jitsu Black Belts.

SUPINE NECK HOLD

This exercise trains both the posterior and anterior muscles of the neck which are highly active in the clinch or when someone is snapping your neck down. Due to the length and cross sectional area of the muscle, these muscles do not require high amounts of weight to be strengthened. Using a light band, attach both ends to bottom of a squat rack or you can use dumbbells to anchor it down. Begin by lying on a bench with your head hanging off the edge of the bench. Place one side of the band along your forehead while maintaining a neutral spine. Hold this position for the set amount of time. You can also maintain the same position with your head off of the edge of the bench without the band as a modified version.

Hold for 3-5 sets of 15-30 seconds



"THE NECK IS THE PILLAR OF THE BODY, BUT NOBODY TRAINS THE NECK AT ALL THESE DAYS. THE TOP GUYS ALL HAVE EXTREMELY STRONG NECKS; TO COMPETE WITH THE BIG BOYS, NECK TRAINING IS ESSENTIAL."
TUCSON BARBELL CLUB

ISOMETRIC LATERAL HOLD ON SWISS BALL

These muscles are engaged while using your head to finish off a double leg take down or fighting off an arm triangle. Begin the exercise by standing perpendicular to the wall. Place your head against the ball and lean into the ball while keeping your body as stiff as possible. Make sure your neck is straight with no side bending to ensure the exercise is as effective and safe as possible.

Hold for 10-30 seconds, 3-5 sets

BAND NECK EXTENSION

Similar to the Supine Neck Hold, this exercise targets the posterior muscles of the neck. Begin the exercise by placing the band around the back of your head. Hinge your hips and grab the band on each side to keep it in place. Flex your neck forward tucking, your chin into your chest, then extend your neck back.

Perform 2-3 sets of 15-20 repetitions

WRESTLER'S BRIDGE

Neck training would be incomplete without this classic exercise. Performed on nearly every wrestling mat, this is a slightly modified variation of the exercise to make it more difficult an to maintain tension on the posterior muscles. Start by sitting on the floor, head resting on the bench, knees bent and feet flat. Extend your hips all the way up until they are parallel to the floor and your spine is in a neutral position. Hold the top position for 5-10 seconds then descend back down until your hips are on the floor.

3-4 sets of 5-8 repetitions.

OVERHEAD DB SHRUG

The upper trapezius muscles are an underrated muscle group that protect the neck from force and greatly help with stabilization. While many automatically assume a traditional heavy barbell shrug targets the upper trapezius, the shoulder blades are not in the most ideal position for muscular activation. That is where the overhead shrug comes in. Begin with a pair of moderately heavy dumbbells directly overhead and your shoulders down. Punch the dumbbells by shrugging your shoulders upward. Maintain a neutral spinal position and look straight ahead while shrugging.

3-4 sets of 10-12 repetitions

It should be noted that many of the exercises here are low load or isometric and should be performed as such regardless of training experience. Studies have shown that increasing the load of these exercises does not reduce the risk of injury or improve performance any further.

Will incorporating neck exercises drastically improve your game and make you a world champion grappler? Of course not, nothing will make you a better jiu-jitsu player other than more time on the mat. It will make you stronger, reduce your risk of injury, and keep you on the mat longer. The neck is a pillar of strength training for combat athletes and while they may seem unimportant, it is active in nearly everything we do. Include these in your next upper body workout routine or incorporate them in your warm up before you get on the mat.

Naveed Shan is a certified strength and conditioning specialist. He is a competitive powerlifter, Strongman, and Lotus Club Jiu-Jitsu blue belt under Giva Santana and trains out of Siege MMA in Glendale, AZ. He is currently pursuing his clinical doctorate in physical therapy from Northern Arizona University

BRIAN RICHARDS

THE BIRTH OF HIS SON FIVE YEARS AGO INSPIRED BRIAN RICHARDS TO DEMAND MORE OF HIMSELF, NOT HAPPY WEIGHING 315LBS BRIAN STARTED WATCHING MMA FIGHTS. SOON AFTER HE DISCOVERED JIU-JITSU AND THE REST IS HISTORY. Today Brian's in great shape and focused on someday becoming a world champion.

AGE: 29
HEIGHT: 5' 9.5"
STARTING WEIGHT: 315lbs.
CURRENT WEIGHT: 204lbs.
HOMETOWN: Brooklyn, NY
HOME SCHOOL: Unity Jiu-Jitsu
INSTRUCTOR: Murilo Santana

How did you discover jiu-jitsu?

It had to be watching an UFC event and seeing Frank Mir armbar Tim Sylva. Frank ended up breaking Sylva's arm. When I saw what jiu-jitsu was capable of, yet being so gentle at the same time it got me into jiu-jitsu.

What motivates you to train?

Being the best I can be as a competitor and achieving a World title, that's definitely a goal of mine. Next would be being a great instructor and helping others do well around me.

What else do you do for physical fitne s?

I basically do jiu-jitsu and weight training along with natural body weight workouts. I train about three days a week of jiu-jitsu or more and then rest the rest of it just training the body making sure I'm physically prepared for competition.

How have you changed your diet?

I cut down from big portions, I ate way too much. I also cut whole milk for almond milk, I eat more fruits and veggies and eat lean meats. I still don't eat as well as I should but I don't do it regularly and I train super hard to maintain weight and stay lean.

What's been the biggest challenge so far?

My biggest challenge right now is finding the means to travel to bigger competitions. I've worked hard in and out of the gym and I would love to showcase the fruits of my labor. This year was my first time at the Worlds and I would definitely love to go back next year. It's hard to get to competitions and I would want nothing more than to travel more.

What's been the best benefi from the changes you've made?

Becoming healthier, lasting longer in my training and just gaining knowledge about the body, how to make it last longer and perform better. It's very important we take care of ourselves in this sport if we want to achieve. It takes hard work on the mats and off. The more you train the tougher you get.

What advice would you give to someone else looking to make the same sort of change?

Stay positive, be patient and do not give up. I swear to you on this, it will happen for you as it did for me. It's a long journey and it has its ups and downs. Be strong willed the best of you is just waiting to be let out. Every day feels like a new journey. Oss.

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